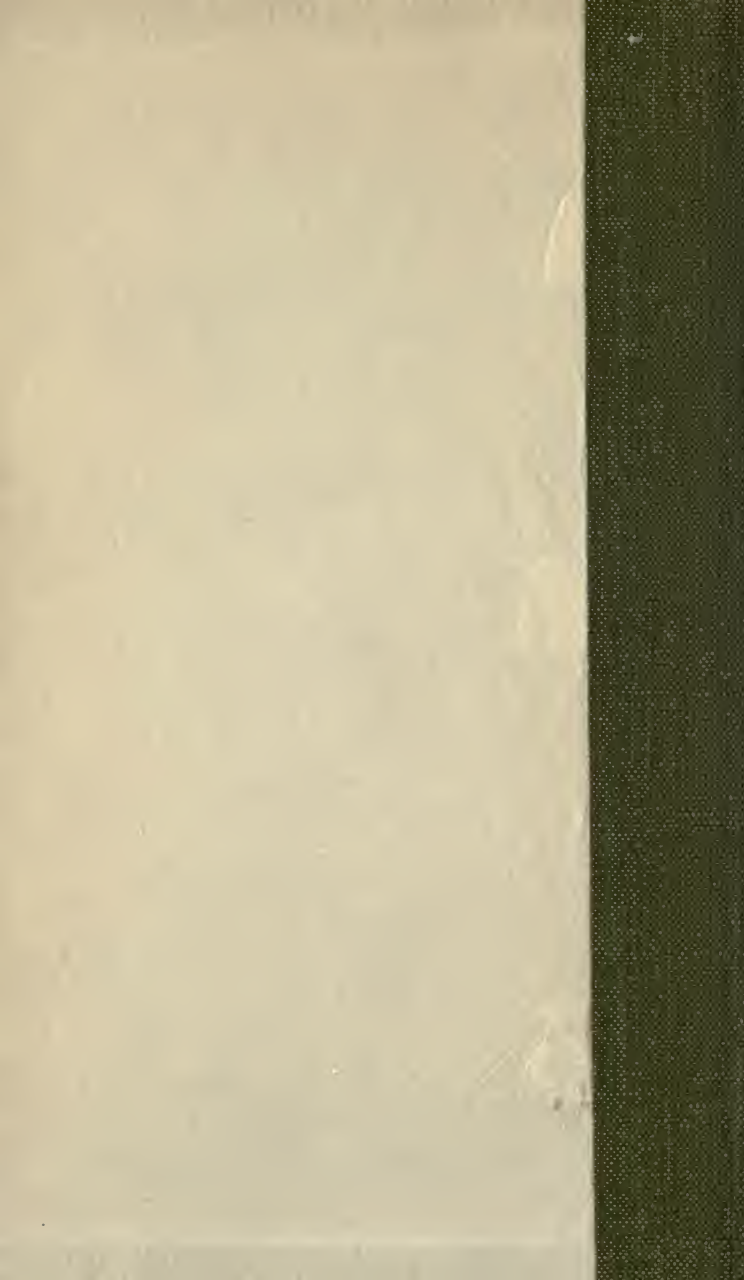
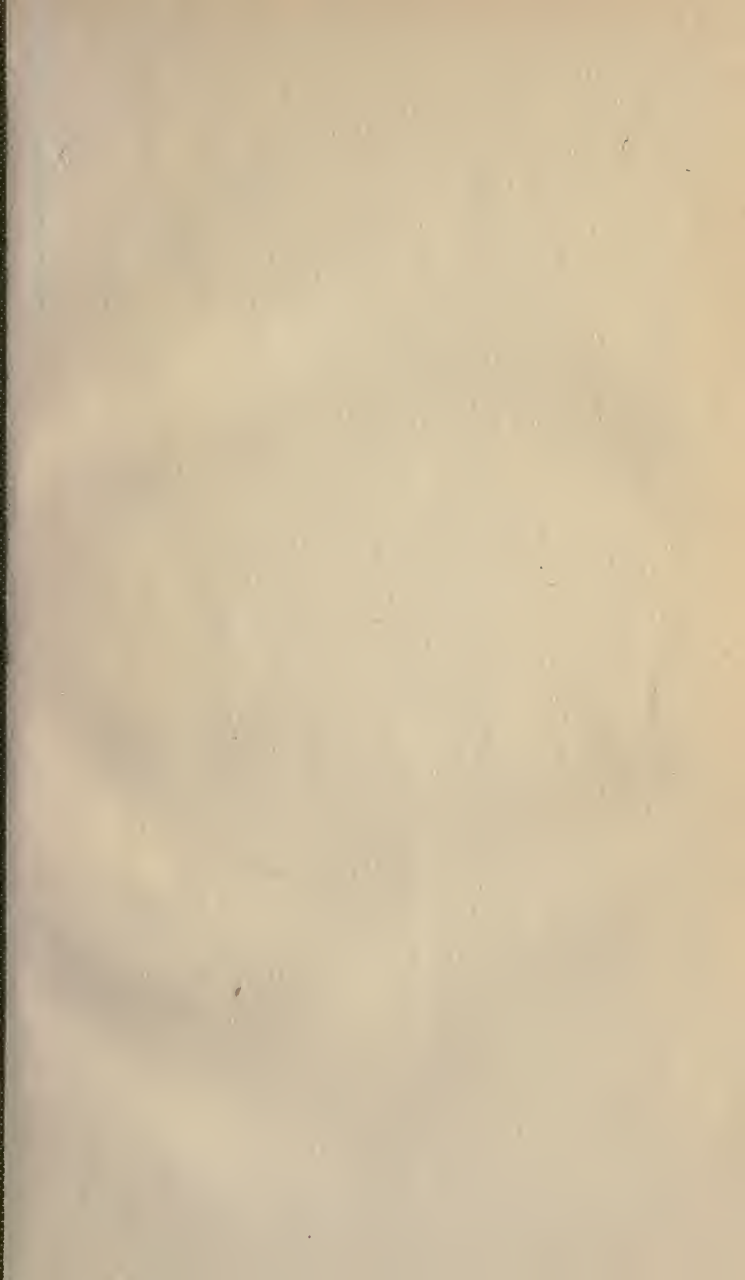


3 1761 04569663 0

UNIV.OF  
TORONTO  
LIBRARY







Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation











Col. Tremball

D. C. Fennell

TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

THE  
LIBRARY

OF

AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY.

---

CONDUCTED

BY JARED SPARKS

---

SECOND SERIES.

VOL. IV.

---

BOSTON:  
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.

1864.

144770  
14/12/17

253052  
402.204

LIBRARY

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1844, by  
CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN,  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

1844  
11/11/41

CLERK OF THE DISTRICT COURT  
DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

LIVES

OF

ROGER WILLIAMS,

TIMOTHY DWIGHT,

AND

COUNT PULASKI.

---

BOSTON:  
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.

1864.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1844, by

CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts



# CONTENTS.

---

## LIFE OF ROGER WILLIAMS.

BY WILLIAM GAMMELL.

	Page.
<i>Preface.</i> . . . . .	3

### CHAPTER I.

<i>His early Life. — His Education. — The Influences that formed his Character and Opinions. — He arrives at Boston.</i> . . . . .	5
--	---

### CHAPTER II.

<i>The Puritan Settlements in Massachusetts. — The Principles on which they were founded. — The Views of Williams. — The Charges of the Magistrates against him. — His Settlement at Salem. — His Removal to Plymouth, and the Cause.</i> . . . . .	12
---	----

### CHAPTER III.

<i>His Reception at Plymouth. — His Discontent there, and Return to Salem. — Results of his Residence at Plymouth. — The Puritans' Dread of Anabaptists.</i> . . . . .	21
--	----

## CHAPTER IV.

*His second Residence in Salem. — His Disapprobation of the Ministers' Meeting. — Treatise concerning the King's Patent. — Troubles with the Magistrates on Account of it. — Conduct of Williams. — He preaches upon the Duty of Women's wearing Veils. — Also against the Cross in the Military Colors. — His Character and Standing in Salem. . . . 28*

## CHAPTER V.

*His Doctrine of the Freedom of Conscience. — The Difficulty in which it involves him with the Clergy and Magistrates. — His Opposition to the Freeman's Oath. — The Persecution of the Magistrates extends to the People of Salem. — He is deserted by his Church. — The Judgment of the Clergy. — The Decree of Banishment. — He leaves Salem. . . . . 38*

## CHAPTER VI.

*His Wanderings after his Banishment. — He visits Massasoit, and begins a Settlement at Seekonk. — He crosses the River, and lays the Foundations of Providence. . . . . 54*

## CHAPTER VII.

*The principal Indian Tribes of New England. — Williams's Intercourse with them. — His*

<i>Views of their Rights, and his Influence with them.—Freedom of the Colony at Providence.—Its Government limited to civil Things.—Circumstances in which Williams is placed.</i>	65
--	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

<i>The Pequot War.—The Services Williams renders the Government of Massachusetts.—His Agency saves the Colonies from Destruction.—His Letter to Governor Winthrop.—Issue of the War.—Manner in which his Services are regarded by Massachusetts.</i>	79
--	----

## CHAPTER IX.

<i>Inadequacy of Legislation for the Suppression of Heresy.—Account of Mrs. Hutchinson and her Controversy in Massachusetts.—Her Adherents are received at Providence.—They settle on Rhode Island.—Williams's Agency in the Purchase of the Island.—Relations of the Colony at Providence with Massachusetts.—Account of Samuel Gorton.—His Settlement at Pawtuxet.—His Difficulties with the People of Providence.</i>	94
--	----

## CHAPTER X.

<i>The New England Confederacy.—The Colonies in Rhode Island excluded.—They appeal to the King.—Williams is appointed their Agent, and sails for England.—Obtains a Charter.—Publishes the Bloody Tenet.—</i>	
---	--

*He returns to Rhode Island with the Charter. — His Reception at Providence. — His Pacification of the Indians. — Organization of a Government under the Charter. — Spirit of its early Legislation. . . . .* 113

## CHAPTER XI.

*Private Life of Williams. — Dissensions in Rhode Island. — Coddington's Commission. — Oppressive Policy of the United Colonies. — Treatment of John Clarke and others in Massachusetts. — Dissatisfaction with Coddington. — Williams and Clarke are appointed Agents of the Colony. — They sail for England. . . . .* 130

## CHAPTER XII.

*State of public Affairs in England. — Williams's Occupations while there. — Coddington's Commission revoked. — Letter of the General Assembly to Williams. — His Intercourse with Sir Henry Vane, Cromwell, and Milton. — His literary Labors. — His Return to Providence. — Reorganization of the Government. — He is elected President of the Colony. . . . .* 144

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Character of his Administration. — He acts as Mediator between the United Colonies and the Indians. — Spirit of Disorder in the Colony. — Williams's Letter to the Town of Providence. — Conduct of William Harris. — Wil-*

<i>liams attempts to conciliate the other Colonies.</i> — <i>Their Efforts to compel Rhode Island to</i> <i>persecute the Quakers.</i> — <i>Her liberal Policy</i> <i>towards them.</i> . . . . .	160
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIV.

<i>He retires from the Presidency.</i> — <i>Charles the</i> <i>Second grants a new Charter to the Colony</i> — <i>Williams appointed an Assistant in the</i> <i>Government.</i> — <i>His Labors for the Indians.</i> — <i>His Controversy with the Quakers.</i> — <i>King</i> <i>Philip's War.</i> — <i>The Services of Williams</i> <i>during the War.</i> — <i>Its Results.</i> — <i>The Close</i> <i>of his Life, and his Death.</i> . . . . .	178
--	-----

## CHAPTER XV.

<i>His religious Opinions.</i> — <i>His Views respecting</i> <i>the Clergy.</i> — <i>Political Opinions.</i> — <i>Character</i> <i>as a Writer.</i> — <i>General Remarks.</i> . . . . .	197
---	-----

## APPENDIX.

No. I. — <i>Charges against Rhode Island.</i> . . . .	209
No. II. — <i>Account of Roger Williams's Writings.</i>	212

## LIFE OF TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

<i>Preface.</i> . . . . .	225
---------------------------	-----



## CHAPTER I.

- His Birth and Parentage. — Physical Character.*  
*— Habits of Exercise. . . . . 229*

## CHAPTER II.

- His intellectual Character. — Ardent Love of Knowledge. — Varied Attainments. — His early and collegiate Education. . . . . 234*

## CHAPTER III.

- His moral and religious Character. . . . . 248*

## CHAPTER IV.

- His social and domestic Character. — Anecdotes illustrative of his social Qualities and Habits. 263*

## CHAPTER V.

- His Character as a Preacher. — Chaplain in the Army of the Revolution. — Settled over a Parish in Greenfield. — His theological Sentiments. — Method of Preaching in the College Chapel. . . . . 277*

## CHAPTER VI.

- His Character as a Teacher, and Head of a College. . . . . 300*

## CHAPTER VII.

- His Character as a Patriot. — His political Opinions, and Habit of expressing them. . . . 322*

CHAPTER VIII.

*His Character as a Philanthropist. — His Interest  
in benevolent and religious Societies. . . . 333*

CHAPTER IX.

*His Character as an Author. — His various  
Publications, in Poetry and Prose, on Theol-  
ogy and miscellaneous Subjects. . . . . 341*

CHAPTER X.

*General Estimate of his Character. . . . . 354*

---

APPENDIX.

*List of President Dwight's Writings. . . . . 361*

---

LIFE OF COUNT PULASKI.

BY JARED SPARKS. . . . . 367

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE  
THE HISTORY OF THE



L I F E  
OF  
R O G E R W I L L I A M S,  
BY  
W I L L I A M G A M M E L L.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 1960

RECEIVED

1960

## PREFACE.

---

IN preparing the following sketch of Roger Williams, the writer has consulted nearly all the works of New England history, from which materials might be derived for the illustration of his life and character. He is, however, by far the most indebted to the elaborate "Memoir," prepared by the late Mr. Knowles, a work of great fulness and accuracy of information respecting not only the immediate subject to which it relates, but also the general affairs of New England in that early age. This work, which probably contains all that can now be known concerning the life of the calumniated founder of Rhode Island, renders the task of a subsequent biographer comparatively easy. The narrative of Mr. Knowles has been generally compared with the original authorities on which he relies, and in all cases his statements have been found to be correct.

In selecting and arranging the materials, which are thus supplied, the aim of the present writer has been, to confine himself to

those which are best fitted to illustrate the personal character of this eminent man, and to furnish the means of estimating aright the services he rendered to his own and to subsequent times. He has sought to give a plain and faithful narrative of a series of events, which seem the more remarkable, as, by the lapse of time, we are further separated from the period in which they occurred. These events, indeed, furnish a sad and perplexing commentary upon the principles of the Puritans, while they serve to impart the aspect of heroism to the life of him, whom the Puritans persecuted and banished. They are now well understood, and are regarded as, in some sense, among the anomalies of history; yet they can never lose their interest and importance. So long as men shall continue to differ on religious subjects, and require the exercise of Christian charity and liberality, so long may they learn lessons of the highest practical value from the life of him, who has been justly styled "the apostle of religious liberty."

# ROGER WILLIAMS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

*His early Life. — His Education. — The Influences that formed his Character and Opinions. — He arrives at Boston.*

OUR only knowledge of the life of ROGER WILLIAMS, previous to his arrival in America, is derived from tradition; and even this tradition rests upon no very certain evidence. No allusion is found in his writings, nor has any trace of documentary history been discovered, which can guide us to definite information concerning this period of his life. His peculiarities of opinion; and his subsequent exclusion from the sympathies of the colonies, undoubtedly contributed to render the interest of the early annalists of New England, in his personal history, far less than in that of most of the other leading men of his time. Not one of them appears to have taken any pains to inquire into his origin, or to

preserve, for the gratification of posterity, any account of his life and fortunes while living in Great Britain.

According to the traditions which have been preserved concerning him, he was born in Wales, in the year 1599. His parents were in the middle ranks of life, but of the character and circumstances of his family, or of the place of his birth, nothing can now be ascertained. He is said to have received his education at the university of Oxford, under the patronage of Sir Edward Coke, whose interest in him was first excited by an incident, which may have been characteristic of the early bias of his mind. He was struck with the young man's appearance at church, and his devout attention during public worship, and one day found that he was taking notes of the sermon. Sir Edward afterwards sent for him, and became so well pleased with his talents and character, that he obtained permission of his parents to place him at one of the colleges at Oxford. His name, however, cannot now be found on any of the rolls of the university, and, from the fact that Sir Edward Coke was himself a graduate of Cambridge, it has been doubted whether Williams did not also receive his education at the same seat of learning.

The whole of the tradition relating to the



patronage of Sir Edward Coke may well be called in question; for, at best, it rests upon no very satisfactory foundation. It is certain, however, from his own statements, as well as from the character of his writings, that Mr. Williams received a classical education, and it is in a very high degree probable, that he pursued his studies at one of the famous seats of learning, which, until a recent period, have given to England nearly all her educated men. After the close of his residence at the university, he is said to have commenced the study of the law, under the guidance of his illustrious patron; but his inclinations, which were early subjected to the influence of strong religious feelings, led him soon to abandon this pursuit, and enter upon the study of theology. This was a study, which largely engrossed the minds of most of the educated men of that age, and to which the growth and culture of his own spiritual nature had already given him a decided and controlling bias. "From my childhood," says he, near the close of his life, "now above threescore years, the Father of lights and mercies touched my soul with a love to himself, to his only-begotten, the true Lord Jesus, and to his Holy Scriptures." The religious character, whose germs were thus early planted, grew and ripened with his years, amidst the retirement of his secluded studies,

and bore fruits in a life of piety and virtue, which won for him the respect and confidence of those with whom he was associated. His mind was enriched and expanded with the best learning of the age; and it is probable, that his preparation for the sacred profession to which he was looking forward, was, for the time, unusually thorough and complete. He was admitted to orders in the established church, though it is not known by what bishop, or in what year, he was ordained. It is also said, that he was appointed to the charge of a parish, while in England; but of this no mention whatever is made in his writings, which now exist.

But, though so little can now be ascertained concerning his personal career in early life, yet the history of that troubled and exciting period of English affairs enables us to form no doubtful estimate of the influences that lent their aid in forming his opinions and shaping his character. He had grown to manhood at a time when society in England was in one of those transition states, which mark the departure of an old and the forming of a new era. The principles of the reformation, which had first been preached in England by Wickliffe and his followers, were slowly and silently working out their legitimate results in the institutions both of the church and the state, not less than in the



minds of the people. Their influence was resisted by the prerogative of the monarch and the power of the hierarchy, and the rites of a corrupted church were still imposed, by statutes of uniformity, upon the free consciences of Englishmen. The great contest, which had commenced with the reformation, between the worn-out forms of a preceding age and the principles of civil and religious freedom, was at that time waged with unabated zeal. It is evident, from numerous passages in his subsequent writings, that Roger Williams, while in England, was no indifferent spectator of the events which marked the age. Into the controversy which then divided the English church, he had undoubtedly thrown himself with all the energy of his ardent and sanguine temperament. He had thoroughly studied the principles at issue between the two parties, and, with no wavering faith, had embraced the tenets of the persecuted Puritans, who then constituted the most pious portion of the established church. He thus became the associate and friend of Cotton and Hooker, and seems to have had occasional intercourse with Vane and Cromwell.

But, in addition to the views, which he held in common with these and other eminent Puritans of his time, the lessons of history, and the workings of his clear and far-seeing mind, had

forced upon his conviction another principle, which, even before he left his native country, had settled itself firmly in his faith. This principle was the inalienable freedom of the conscience, the responsibility of man to God alone in all matters of religious belief and worship. It had been held, and occasionally asserted, in some modified form, by the friends of freedom in a former age, and was, indeed, a legitimate result of the spirit and doctrines of the reformation ; but in the mind of Roger Williams alone, in modern times, does it appear to have been first conceived in the length and breadth of its universal application.

Holding such views, it is not surprising that he should have been among the earliest to join the bands of emigrants, who were preparing to seek an asylum for their persecuted worship upon the shores of New England. Some of his acquaintances had already preceded him to the new world, while the Puritans, in every part of England, were looking with anxious interest to the colonies, which had thus been planted beyond the sea. Yielding to the general impulse which then so widely prevailed, he embarked at Bristol, on the 1st of December, 1630, in the ship *Lion*, Captain Pierce, master, (the same ship, which, in successive passages, bore so many of the emigrants to New England,) and, after a

tempestuous voyage of sixty-six days, arrived at Boston, on the 5th of February, 1631.

He was now in the thirty-second year of his age, and in the full maturity of all his powers, having already acquired a reputation for eloquence and piety, which had spread widely in England, and had preceded him to America. His arrival at Boston is mentioned by Governor Winthrop, in his Journal, as of "a godly minister," and was doubtless hailed, by the churches of the infant settlements of Massachusetts Bay, as an accession to their strength of the precious gifts of piety and learning. They little anticipated the startling doctrines he would put forth; and he had no intimation of the singular destiny, that was preparing for him, amid the unknown wilderness to which he had come.

When he embarked at Bristol, he had been recently married, and was accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Mary Williams, a lady, who lived to share his changeful fortunes among the checkered scenes through which he subsequently passed, but of whose early history even less is known than of that of her husband.

## CHAPTER II.

*The Puritan Settlements in Massachusetts. — The Principles on which they were founded. — The Views of Williams. — The Charges of the Magistrates against him. — His Settlement at Salem. — His Removal to Plymouth, and the Cause.*

THE settlements composing the colony of Massachusetts Bay were established in the year 1628, and the two years following. The first company of emigrants settled at Salem in 1628, and was under the direction of the enterprising and fearless Endicott. In the year 1630, there arrived in the bay another band of Pilgrims, who, like their brethren of Plymouth, had already organized a commonwealth, and elected their officers, under a charter from the King, which henceforth was to be administered within the territory of the colony, of whose existence and rights it contained the guaranty. This company was by far the most wealthy and most cultivated of all the bands of emigrants, who had yet arrived in New England. There were among its members men of large hereditary fortune, and of gentle blood; scholars versed in all the learning of the times; civilians long

practised in the study of public affairs; and clergymen whose learning and piety had won the highest respect of their parishes in England. At the head of all was Winthrop, whom they had chosen Governor, a man of the noblest virtues, whose warm enthusiasm was tempered by mild and gentle benevolence, and whose bland and high-bred manners were fitted to command the love and respect of his associates, and, even amidst the privations of the wilderness, to throw an air of dignity and a charm of propriety over every scene of life upon which he entered.

We may well pause, for a moment, to consider the principles which the fathers of Massachusetts had incorporated into their commonwealth, and upon which they had erected the fabric of their society. It is a mistake, as has often been remarked, to suppose that they came to New England with any notions of unlimited freedom of conscience. It was no part of their aim, in bidding farewell to their native island, to build, across the ocean, an asylum for the persecuted of every name. Even the possibility of such a state of society had never dawned upon their minds. "The emigrants," as has justly been said, "were a body of sincere believers, desiring purity of religion, not a colony of philosophers, bent upon universal toleration." They



had come to "this outside of the world," as they deemed it, to enjoy, unmolested, their own worship, and to practise, without hinderance or restraint, the principles of their own faith. . They were generally members of the established church of England, but desired that the principles of the reformation should be applied still more thoroughly to purify her doctrines, and elevate and spiritualize her worship. It was to escape oppression for themselves, not to secure the boon of freedom to others; to carry into practice their own views of Christian worship, and their own doctrines of civil liberty, not to open a temple for the disciples of every faith and the adherents of every creed; that they had braved the ocean and the wilderness, and begun to plant their civil and religious institutions beneath these unpropitious skies.

To secure the accomplishment of this object, the dearest which their hearts could cherish, all their legislation was designed, and all the arrangements of their society were framed. It was in accordance with this, that they reserved to themselves the right of admitting only whom they pleased as freemen of the colony; and within a little more than a year after their arrival, they "ordered and agreed that, for time to come, no man should be admitted to the freedom of the body politic, but such as are members of some

of the churches within the limits of the same." It was the aspiration of the Puritans to form a Christian republic, after the model of the Jewish theocracy, in which the laws of Moses should constitute the rules of civil life. Their system, thus educed from the highest sources of authority, tolerated no contradiction and allowed of no dissent. The mandates of public sentiment, not less than the enactments of the General Court, in the infant colony, were as stern and unyielding as had been the statutes of uniformity, from whose tyrannical operation they had fled when they embarked for the shores of the new world. Wrapped in their singular and somewhat original social system there lay the germs both of immense good and immense evil; of a moral energy that was to bless the world by the results it has produced, and of dissensions that were to rend their youthful republic, and kindle the fires of intolerance and fanaticism even upon the spots most sacred to freedom.

Such were the principles on which the colony of Massachusetts Bay had been founded, and such was its spirit during the first year of its existence, in the course of which Roger Williams landed upon its shores, and became one of its residents. Like the colonists who had preceded him, he had come hither for conscience' sake, to find, for the profession and the practice

of his religious faith, a freedom which England had refused to grant. Here, then, we may well suppose, Mr. Williams had expected to realize the visions of his imagination, and find a state of society in which he could cherish and express the great doctrines which had taken full possession of his soul. He was among those with whom, in the essential points of Christian faith and morals, he entirely agreed. In the applications of his great principle of the freedom of conscience, however, there were constantly presented occasions of infinite disagreement.

Scarcely had he stepped ashore at Boston, when he found the whole civil and ecclesiastical authorities of Massachusetts arrayed in hostility against him. In the asylum of the exiled Puritans, intolerance had also found a home. The same odious principle, which, by uniting the church with the civil power, had given rise to all the persecutions, that, during three centuries, had stained the soil of England with martyrs' blood, and driven into exile some of the master-spirits of her people, was also incorporated into the society of the New England Pilgrims. Its form and aspect, indeed, were changed, but its spirit was still the same. Its action was chastened by the straitened circumstances of exile, and of an infant state; but it still authorized the civil magistrate to watch over the opin-



ions of men, to punish for errors of doctrine, and for neglect of religious duties, and was destined, by its subsequent applications, to destroy the harmony and quiet of the New England colonies, and to fix upon the escutcheon of some of them the foulest stains.

A few weeks after his arrival, Mr. Williams was invited by the church at Salem to become assistant to their pastor, the Reverend Mr. Skelton; but the magistrates of the colony had heard of his opinions, and immediately interposed their remonstrances with the people of Salem to prevent his settlement. The reasons of this interference on the part of the authorities, as alleged in the letter, which they addressed to the church at Salem, are, first, that Mr. Williams had refused to join with the congregation at Boston, because they would not declare their repentance for having had communion with the churches of England while they lived there; secondly, that he "had declared his opinion, that the magistrate might not punish a breach of the Sabbath, nor any other offence that was a breach of the first table."

With respect to the former of these charges, it is difficult now to determine, precisely, how much importance he attached to the sin of which he thus called the Boston church to declare their repentance. It is, however, certain that

he was not alone in thinking the Puritans had done wrong in holding communion with those, whose power and resources were constantly employed in crushing the spirit of true piety in England. It was, in his estimation, allowing a compromise with sin. It was lending an indirect sanction and connivance to a church, whose usages he deemed corrupt, and whose government he regarded as tyranny. Whatever views may now be entertained of this sentiment, it will scarcely be pretended that it furnished any ground for the magistrates to prevent the settlement of Mr. Williams in the ministry to which he had been ordained, and to which he was now called by the suffrages of the church in Salem.

The second of the above charges, it will be seen, relates to his declaration of the great doctrine, to the vindication and elucidation of which he was to devote his life. His doctrine was in direct conflict with both the opinions and the practices of the colony of Massachusetts, whose counsellors and elders considered themselves the appointed guardians of the orthodoxy of the people; and in that age they could conceive of no other mode of executing their trust, than by inflicting civil penalties upon every one who ventured to dissent even in the most unimportant particulars from the prevailing faith. The opinion of Roger Williams, which was then urged

in proof of his unsuitableness to become a minister of the gospel, has long since become the common sentiment of the American people, and is fast spreading itself over the civilized world, everywhere, in its course, giving peace to the distracted elements of society, and placing on a sure basis the institutions both of government and religion.

Mr. Williams, however, had already removed to Salem, where, on the 12th of April, 1631, he was settled as a minister of the church, notwithstanding the opposition of the magistrates, who at the time were assembled at Boston. On the 18th of the following May, after having been duly propounded, he was admitted a free-man of the colony, and took the usual oath of allegiance prescribed in such cases. He was now, in the fullest sense of the word, a citizen of the colony, and one of the ministers of its oldest church. He had thus identified himself with its interests by the most significant acts which a citizen can perform, and was doubtless as ready to labor in its service, and to share its burdens, as any of those who had been appointed to preside over its affairs. The people of Salem had extended to him their confidence, and his life and ministry there had confirmed their respect and attachment, and were giving promise

of a long career, as their guide, and teacher, and friend.

But his settlement here was destined to be brought to an early close. The act of the church in calling him to be their minister, contrary to the advice of the Governor and General Court, had awakened the stern displeasure of those functionaries, and was not easily forgiven. His own opinions, also, which he had taken no pains to disguise, had excited the suspicions of the magistrates and elders of the colony; and, true to their united trust, as the guardians of the popular faith, they did not allow him to remain in peace at a post to which he had been invited in disregard of their wishes and advice. For the sake of private opinions, therefore, which did not in the least affect his relations to the civil power, as a citizen, he and his church were continually harassed and disturbed. At length, after the lapse of a few months, as is thought, at the close of the summer, he removed from Salem, and sought a residence in the colony of Plymouth, beyond the persecuting jurisdiction of the Court of Massachusetts Bay. This removal was undoubtedly dictated by prudence and a desire for peace and quiet, and was not the result of his own independent choice; for in the venerable pastor, and among the people of Salem,

he had found friends, whose interests in his ministry, respect for his character, and attention to his welfare, had enlisted in their behalf his warmest feelings of regard, which he long continued to cherish.

---

### CHAPTER III.

*His Reception at Plymouth. — His Discontent there, and Return to Salem. — Results of his Residence at Plymouth. — The Puritans' Dread of Anabaptists.*

MR. WILLIAMS removed to Plymouth probably in the month of August, 1631. He was received there with the respect which his reputation as a minister, and his high personal character, were so well calculated to call forth. He was entertained by the Governor and the leading citizens, and after some time, having been admitted to the church, was settled as assistant to the pastor, the Reverend Ralph Smith. The Puritans who had come over in the *Mayflower*, and settled at Plymouth, had, from the first, manifested a more liberal spirit than their neighbors, who had subsequently settled in the Bay.



Before they embarked upon their perilous voyage, they had resided for some time in Holland, and become entirely alienated from the established church of England. It is probable that, on this account, the views of Roger Williams, concerning the propriety of holding communion with that church, were, to say the least, less offensive to them than to their brethren of Massachusetts. However this may have been, they seem to have been ready to receive him among them with the most cordial fellowship, and with more than usual attention and respect. Governor Bradford says his teaching was "well approved, for the benefit whereof," he adds, "I shall bless God, and am thankful to him ever for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs, so far as they agreed with truth."

But though he had now fixed his residence beyond the jurisdiction of the Court of Massachusetts, he had not removed from the reach of that disposition which displays itself in every age, and in all conditions of society, to distrust and annoy those who are in advance of prevailing opinions, or at variance with existing institutions. It is the usual destiny of such men to be misunderstood and suspected by their contemporaries, and often to be proscribed as the enemies of the state, even while they are studiously cherishing its dearest interests. Thus

was it with Roger Williams at Plymouth. His sentiments of freedom, and his earnest declaration of the rights of the soul, though they seem never to have provoked the action either of the church or of the civil authorities, were not long in awakening the suspicions of the principal men of the colony. It is probable, also, that many were the more ready to detect the heresy that lurked in his views on this subject, from a sympathy with their brethren of the neighboring colony, and a knowledge of the reputation he had acquired as the advocate of a dangerous freedom while resident at Boston and Salem. So faithful, however, was his preaching, so exemplary and beneficent was his daily life, that he retained the affections and respect of the people, even while many of them were distrustful of the liberal principles, which he promulgated. His own feelings, however, were never so strongly enlisted in the people of Plymouth, as they had been in those of the town where he had first been settled as a minister of the gospel. It may be, indeed, that he had never regarded his removal to Plymouth as anything more than a temporary retirement from the storm of an excited and virulent public sentiment in the sister colony. His heart still turned to Salem, and longed to renew the hopes and the interests with which he had first entered upon

his ministry there ; and, accordingly, after an absence of about two years, on receiving an invitation from the people of that town to resume his place among them, he left Plymouth in the month of August of the year 1633.

His residence at Plymouth, brief though it was, had yet been marked by incidents of no inconsiderable importance in their bearing upon his subsequent career and destiny. It was here, that his first child was born, a daughter, who received her mother's name, and, we may naturally suppose, constituted another most tender tie, that bound him to his family and his home. But the most important among the incidents of his life at Plymouth were the intercourse he held, and the friendly intimacy he formed, with some of the most celebrated chiefs of the various Indian tribes, who came to promote alliance and prosecute trade with the colonists of New England. Here he won the regard of the venerable Massasoit, the father of King Philip, and chief of the Wampanoags, who, from the seat of his royal race at Mount Hope, had often gone to brighten, by friendly intercourse, the chain that bound him to his early allies. Here, too, he conversed with the Narragansett warriors, whose stern chiefs, the aged and wise Canonicus, and the fierce though generous Miantonomo, had broken through the shyness of savage life, and sought to conciliate



the favor of their new neighbors. It is probable, also, that, at this period of his life, he made excursions into the domains of these wild warriors, and, in the rude cabins of the natives, studied their strange characters and their manner of life, and acquired the rudiments of their uncouth language. In a letter written many years afterwards, he says, "God was pleased to give me a painful, patient spirit, to lodge with them in their filthy, smoky holes, even while I lived at Plymouth and Salem, to gain their tongue." The knowledge which he thus acquired, and the friendships with the chiefs which he thus cemented, proved of incalculable advantage to him, in the days when he was driven forth an exile from the homes of civilized men, to wander in the wintry forest, and seek, in the comfortless dwellings of the heathen, the protection and the charities which Christians had denied to him.

It is probable, also, that this acquaintance with the Indians served to call his attention more particularly to their moral condition, and to enlist his earliest interest in their religious instruction, and their conversion to Christianity. "My soul's desire," says he, "was to do the natives good;" and his whole life, passed amidst the perils and privations of the wilderness, and in deeds of justice

and beneficence to its rude dwellers, proves the sincerity of his desire.

At the time when Mr. Williams asked a dismission from the church at Plymouth, many of its members sought to dissuade him from his design of removing from the colony, and were reluctant to grant his request. He was, at length, however, dismissed, at the instance of Mr. Brewster, the ruling elder, who, probably, disliking his views, urged upon the church that he held dangerous opinions, and was even tainted with the heresy of Anabaptism; and, if he remained among them, "might run the same course of rigid separation and Anabaptistry" as had a "Sebaptist" of the name of John Smyth, whom they had known in Holland.

Of all the forms of heresy known in that age, none, save Papacy alone, seems to have been so frightful to the imagination of the Puritans as Anabaptism; a term which defined, in some vague manner, the views of a sect who baptized again those who united with them from other denominations. A portion of those connected with this sect in Germany, about the middle of the sixteenth century, embracing the doctrines of civil freedom, and led on by demagogues and fanatics, had united with Catholics and Lutherans in a fierce and sanguinary contest against

their feudal masters, and waged for years the furious strife known as the Rustic War. So determined were their bravery and perseverance, and so wide-spread was the dismay which their fanatical insurrection had caused, that their supposed tenets and character had come to be regarded with horror throughout the Christian world. They had always contended most strenuously against all prescriptive right, whether of priest or of king; and the doctrines of republican liberty, and of individual independence, which they associated with their religious faith, were generally regarded, in that age when the divine right of kings had scarcely been questioned, as the germs of every species of anarchy and disorder.

The very mention of the name of Anabaptism called up a train of phantoms, that never failed to excite the apprehensions of the early Puritans. Hence it was, that when Mr. Brewster suggested even the remotest association of Roger Williams with this heresy, the church at Plymouth were easily induced to grant the dismissal which he had requested. A considerable number of its members, however, who had become attached to his ministry, were also dismissed at the same time, and removed with him to Salem.

## CHAPTER IV.

*His second Residence in Salem. — His Disapprobation of the Ministers' Meeting. — Treatise concerning the King's Patent. — Troubles with the Magistrates on Account of it. — Conduct of Williams. — He preaches upon the Duty of Women's wearing Veils. — Also against the Cross in the Military Colors. — His Character and Standing in Salem.*

THE early historians of the colony of Massachusetts Bay have displayed far greater zeal in setting forth the errors of doctrine imputed to Roger Williams, than in framing any connected narrative of the events with which he was so intimately associated. They have with one accord been eager to vindicate the proceedings of the magistrates against him, but seem never to have imagined that so troublesome a person would ever become an object of interest to posterity, and still less that his most offensive principles would ever be regarded as the birthright of humanity. Hence there is a singular confusion of dates in the accounts, which have been given of his second residence in Salem; and, in narrating the events of this important period of his life, we cannot always be sure that we are fol-

lowing the order of time, or pursuing the permanent relations of historical cause and effect.

Mr. Williams probably returned to Salem, as has already been mentioned, in the latter part of August of the year 1633. He resided there a year after his removal from Plymouth, exercising his ministry "by way of prophecy," as it was termed, before he was settled as pastor of the church. This event took place on the death of his aged friend, Mr. Skelton, in the summer of 1634. During this year, however, he was often harassed by the magistrates and elders of the colony, and was more than once summoned before the General Court to answer for his opinions.

Soon after his return to Salem, we find him joining with his associate in the church, the Reverend Mr. Skelton, in calling in question the expediency of a meeting of ministers, which had been established in the colony for the discussion of questions in theology, and for other similar purposes of mutual improvement. The ground of the exception thus taken by the Salem ministers is alleged by Governor Winthrop to have been, a fear "that it might grow, in time, to a presbytery, or superintendency, to the prejudice of the churches' liberties." This apprehension indicates a mind jealous of the interests of liberty, and, perhaps, somewhat inclined to mag-



nify the perils to which it is always exposed from clerical or ecclesiastical associations. The apprehension was undoubtedly groundless; yet it will scarcely be denied, that it was the natural result of an experience such as that of Roger Williams had been, both in England and the colonies. It served to strengthen, and call forth more fully, the suspicions of his orthodoxy, which had already been awakened in the minds of the clergy, and was doubtless one in the long train of circumstances, that led on the proceedings against him.

But it was not alone in trifling matters like this, that the suspicious vigilance of the magistrates and the elders found occasions on which to display itself. The workings of his free and fearless mind soon gave cause for more serious offence. During his residence at Plymouth, he had drawn up and presented to the Governor and Council of that colony, a treatise on the nature of the right claimed by the monarchs of the several nations of Christendom to dispose of the countries of barbarous tribes, by virtue of discovery. In this treatise, says Governor Winthrop, "among other things, he disputed their right to the land they possessed, and concluded, that, claiming by the King's grant, they could have no title, nor otherwise, except they compounded with the natives." The offensive

manuscript, though it had never been published, and was not even written in Massachusetts, he was yet required to deliver to the Governor for examination; and, as was usual in all the important proceedings of the colonial government, the advice of the ministers was taken, and he was ordered to appear at the next Court, to receive censure. In the treatise he had written, there were, the Governor proceeds to say, "three passages whereat they were much offended. First, for that he chargeth King James to have told a solemn public lie, because in his patent he blessed God, that he was the first Christian prince that discovered this land. Secondly, for that he chargeth him and others with blasphemy, for calling Europe Christendom, or the Christian world. Thirdly, for that he did personally apply to our present King Charles, these three places in the Revelations, viz."—The passages themselves, unfortunately for the reader's curiosity, the Governor has failed to mention.

This treatise, if it was ever published, has not been preserved; and the only account, which has been given of it, let it be remembered, is that of the very magistrate by whom it was required for examination. But, taking even the version thus furnished, which, on the very best construction, is liable to savor, in some degree, at least, of an *ex parte* statement,

the act of the General Court can be regarded as nothing less than a despotic exercise of absolute power. It demanded from the privacy of his own desk an unpublished manuscript, which he had written within another jurisdiction, on a great subject of abstract right and of natural law, and summoned him to appear and receive censure for the opinions it contained. Why these opinions should have been thus offensive to the fathers of Massachusetts, it is now by no means easy to determine. They did not essentially differ from the practice of the early colonists, who, in all cases, made some remuneration to the natives for the lands which they occupied; nor were they at all at variance with the original instructions given by the British cabinet to Endicott and the settlers at Salem. The language of these instructions was, "If any of the salvages pretend right of inheritance to all, or any part of the lands granted in our patent, we pray you endeavor to purchase their title, that we may avoid the least scruple of intrusion."\* The great principle of natural right on which those practices and instructions were founded, had presented itself with surprising clearness to the mind of Roger Williams, and he fearlessly accepted the conclusions to which

---

\* Bancroft, Vol. I. p. 346.



it conducted him. So strongly had they taken possession of his mind, that he addressed a letter to the King himself, as he says, "not without the approbation of some of the chiefs of New England, then tender also upon this point before God," "humbly acknowledging the evil of that part of the patent, which respects the donation of land."\*

Had these opinions proceeded from a different source, or been advocated with less clearness and boldness, it is probable they might have given less offence to the magistrates, and occasioned their author far less trouble. But, coming from one who was already an object of suspicion, and calling in question, as they plainly did, the principle of the King's patents, they seemed, both to the Court and the clergy, to be the expressions alike of heresy and sedition. It was, undoubtedly, on this account, that the Court, who in this, as in other instances, extended their jurisdiction over the opinions as well as the actions of the people, thus arbitrarily summoned him to appear before them and receive censure.

The conduct of Mr. Williams, under this harassing treatment of the authorities, was such as reflects the highest honor both upon the

---

\* Reply to Mr. Cotton, p. 277 .

firmness and clearness of his understanding, and upon the feelings of his heart. He complied with the orders of the Court, odious and offensive to his sense of right as they must have been, and wrote letters to the magistrates, alleging that his treatise had been written "only for the private satisfaction of the Governor of Plymouth;" and, with expressions of penitence, if he had committed any wrong, and of loyalty to the King, though without renouncing his opinions, he submissively offered the manuscript to be burned. He has often been charged with obstinacy and troublesome pertinacity; but, in this case, for once at least, he displayed a spirit entirely the reverse, and which seems to have surprised and subdued even his bitterest persecutors; for, says the historian, "they found the matters not to be so evil as at first they seemed." Thus were his firm adherence to the principles of justice, and the clear convictions of his reason, mellowed with the mild spirit of Christian forbearance; and thus, even amidst oppression and outrage, did he manifest that sublime charity which thinketh no evil, which suffereth long, and is kind.

It is not essential to the ends of this memoir to attempt even a sketch of any of the numerous public disputes that so often and so deeply agitated that age of controversy. Their

history is a melancholy record of the struggles, and bigotry, and strife, through which our New England society was made to pass, before it emerged into the universal tolerance, the quiet repose, the friendly association, of the different forms of religious faith, which now characterize our happy communities. With but few of these was Roger Williams, in any manner, particularly connected. During his second residence at Salem, he is said to have preached to his congregation upon the duty of women to wear veils in all public assemblies, a question which appears to have been quite seriously discussed among the ministers of the colony. The doctrine was controverted by Mr. Cotton, who, happening to preach at Salem while the question was occupying public attention, showed, to the satisfaction of his hearers, that the custom "had no sufficient foundation in Scripture." The introduction of such topics into the pulpit was by no means confined to Roger Williams; for, in those days, the minister was in the habit of discussing, in his sermons, every topic of legislation and of manners, as well as of morals and religion. John Eliot, the noble-minded apostle to the Indians, and President Chauncy, the head of Harvard College, preached earnest and learned discourses on the practice of wearing wigs; and, in 1649, the whole body

of the magistrates, with Endicott at their head, signed a solemn protest against the custom of men's wearing long hair, and requested the clergy to preach against it, "as a thing uncivil and unmanly, whereby men do deform themselves, and offend sober and modest men, and do corrupt good manners."\*

In another of the ephemeral controversies of the day, Mr. Williams appears to have taken a larger share. The military ensign then established as the colors of the several regiments of the English army, contained, among its devices, the sign of the cross. Williams delivered a discourse on the unlawfulness of all ceremonies and symbols, which had been borrowed from the service of idolatry, or of Popery, on the ground that their use tended to lead men back to superstition and false religion. In accordance with this doctrine, which, indeed, was one of the favorite principles of the Puritans, Mr. Endicott, one of the magistrates of Salem, ordered the cross to be cut out of the colors; an act which, in some of its features, bore the appearance of treason against the King, and which, for a time, was productive of no little strife among the disputatious colonists of the Bay. The matter was referred to the Governor

---

\* Hutchinson's *Hist. of Mass.* Vol. 1. p. 143.

and the General Court, and stirred deeply the fountains of public sentiment, and was at length settled only by a species of compromise, by leaving the odious symbol out of the colors of the companies in the colony, and retaining it in the flag of the castle, and in those of the shipping in the harbor.

The incidents narrated above occurred during the period in which Mr. Williams had been performing the duties of a minister in Salem, in the capacity of assistant to the pastor of the church. By the assiduity and faithfulness with which he had discharged these duties, and the character he had ever maintained in the community, he won for his ministry the respect of the people, and attained to high standing and influence, both as a clergyman and a citizen. Accordingly, on the death of Mr. Skelton, he was invited by the church to become their teacher. Against this invitation, as against that which had been given him on a former occasion, the Court sent their decided remonstrance, and requested the church at Salem not to ordain him. The church, however, with a becoming independence, disregarded the remonstrance, and Mr. Williams was regularly instituted in the pastoral office in August, 1634. This act was regarded by the Court as a high-handed contempt of their authority, which was



not soon forgiven, and, as a subsequent chapter will show, was at length punished in a most remarkable and characteristic manner.

---

## CHAPTER V.

*His Doctrine of the Freedom of Conscience.— The Difficulty in which it involves him with the Clergy and Magistrates.— His Opposition to the Freeman's Oath.— The Persecution of the Magistrates extends to the People of Salem.— He is deserted by his Church.— The Judgment of the Clergy.— The Decree of Banishment.— He leaves Salem.*

FROM the period of Mr. Williams's final settlement as the teacher of the church in Salem, may be dated the beginning of the controversy with the clergy and Court of Massachusetts, which, at length, terminated in his banishment from the colony. He was surrounded by men, both in ecclesiastical and civil life, whose minds were, as yet, incapable of forming a conception of the great principle of spiritual freedom, which had taken full possession of his soul, and which was now gradually moulding all his opinions, and, by unseen agencies, shaping the

destiny, which the future had in store for him. He believed that no human power had the right to intermeddle in matters of conscience; and that neither church nor state, neither bishop nor priest nor King, may prescribe the smallest iota of religious faith. For this, he maintained, a man is responsible to God alone.

This principle, now so familiar and well-established, was, in all its applications, entirely at variance with the whole structure of society in the colony of Massachusetts; and every new assertion of it on the part of Mr. Williams, or of any of the doctrines which he had connected with it, was sure to lead him into new collision with the authorities. Hence it was, that every expression of his opinions seemed to be heresy, and almost every act of his life a protest against the legislation and the customs of the people among whom he lived. His preaching was faithful, his doctrines on all the great essentials of Christian faith were sound, and his life was of blameless purity. Yet he was fast falling beneath the ban both of civil and ecclesiastical proscription. His own church had expressed their confidence in his character; but beyond his fellow-citizens of Salem, there was none that extended to him the hand of fellowship, or expressed the slightest sympathy with the great truths that were struggling in his mind.

The occurrences, which have already been related, had undoubtedly confirmed the prejudices of the magistrates, and exerted an important influence in hastening on the severe proceedings, which were finally adopted against him. It has also been said that these occurrences were deemed more flagrant and dangerous in consequence of a feeling of jealousy, which existed at that time between Boston and Salem. Boston was the residence of the Governor and of most of the Council. It was also the capital of the colony, and the centre of both civil and religious influence and authority. It would not be strange, therefore, if the views of a minister of Salem should be regarded with suspicion more readily than would have been the case with a minister of Boston. The reputation of Mr. Williams among his own townsmen was of high order and of unsullied purity. He had brought with him to Salem some of the inhabitants of Plymouth, who were attached to his ministry, and it may have been feared that, in connection with other causes, his resolute spirit and popular talents would give an importance to the town that might eclipse the metropolis.

However this may have been, but few sessions of the Court were held, during his second residence in Salem, at which he was not summoned to appear, or at which his opinions or



conduct were not, in some manner, the subject of complaint and reprobation. A few months after his settlement as pastor of the church, we find him again obnoxious to the Court for having publicly called in question the King's patent, and also "for usual terming the churches of England antichristian." Again, in the following April, 1635, the Governor and assistants summoned him to appear at Boston. "The occasion was," as appears from the Journal of Governor Winthrop, "that he had taught publicly that a magistrate ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man, for that we thereby have communion with a wicked man in the worship of God, and cause him to take the name of God in vain. He was heard before all the ministers, and very clearly confuted." So says the Governor. Had Mr. Williams given a version of the argument, the result might have been stated differently.

The opinion of Mr. Williams, here referred to, seems to have been called forth on the occasion of the Court's enacting what is known by the name of the "Freeman's Oath." This oath was appointed from an apprehension of "Episcopal and malignant practices against the country," in order to test the fidelity of the people of the colony. It in reality changed the obligations of allegiance from the government of

King Charles to the government of Massachusetts, and, by an order of the Court, was imposed upon every man of sixteen years of age and upwards, upon the penalty of his being punished, in case of refusing to take it, at the discretion of the Court. Williams opposed the oath, as contrary to the charter, and as inconsistent with the duty of British subjects; and, in the course of his opposition, he developed his singular views of the nature of an oath. His great principle of the liberty of conscience led him to doubt the right of the colony to impose an oath; and his opposition was so determined, that "the government was forced to desist from that proceeding."

His opinions upon this subject appear to have been maintained by a train of reasoning peculiar to himself; and, though unfolded somewhat at length in some of his subsequent writings, they are yet by no means easy of full comprehension. He seems to have regarded an oath as in some sense an act of worship, which was to be entered upon only on the most serious occasions, and with devout feelings, and which, like any other act of worship, the civil magistrate had no right to enforce against the consent of the individual. His opinions, it would appear, were formed while living in England; it may be, from an observation of the light

manner in which oaths were administered, and of the offensive formality of kissing the Bible, which was usually connected with their administration. In his reply to George Fox, he declares, that he has submitted to the loss of large sums in the courts of England, rather than yield to these formalities, though he did not object to taking the oath without them; which the judges, he says, were unwilling to admit, without an act of Parliament.

The controversy with the authorities of Massachusetts, in which the principles of Williams had impelled him to engage, was now becoming every day more violent, and running into almost every act of the Court, and every relation of social life. They still maintained a connection with the Church of England, and manifested a respect for its institutions. Williams retained a vivid recollection of its intolerant acts, and boldly declared its "bloody tenet of persecution," as he termed it, to be "most lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Jesus Christ." The magistrates enacted a law, requiring every man to attend public worship, and to contribute to its support. This he denounced as an open violation of natural rights, and the prolific source of every form of persecution. "No one," said he, "should be bound to maintain a worship against his own consent." The ablest divines were ap-

pointed to reason with him, and to confute the heresies that seemed wrought into his very being. But it was all in vain. His opinions were misrepresented, and carried out to absurd and unauthorized conclusions, and these were charged upon him as essential parts of his doctrine ; but he contented himself simply with denying what he did not believe, and reiterating, with irrepressible boldness, the faith which he held. This faith set a clear and well-defined limit to the exercise of the civil power. "It extends," said he, with singular accuracy and clearness of perception, "only to the bodies, and goods, and outward estates of men ;" with conscience and with religious opinions "the civil magistrate may not intermeddle, even to stop a church from apostasy and heresy." These were the opinions that inflamed the whole body of the divines, and called down upon his head the sternest censures from both the civil and ecclesiastical heads of the colony.

While affairs were in this condition, the people of Salem preferred to the Court a claim for a tract of land lying in Marblehead Neck ; but the Court, as a punishment for the contempt of authority the town had shown in settling Mr Williams, refused to allow the claim. The reason of the refusal was imbodyed in the decision itself. This reckless mingling together of mat-

ters entirely separate and independent, Williams taught his church strongly to resent, as an act of flagrant injustice. In conjunction with the church, he wrote "letters of admonition unto all the churches, whereof any of the magistrates were members, that they might admonish the magistrates of their injustice." \* This course, in our times, would be called appealing to the people; for the members of the churches alone were freemen of the colony, and in the absence of that great redresser of wrongs, the public press,† it was the only mode in which the general sense of justice could be effectually addressed. But the democratic principle was then in its infancy, and the right of instruction to the deputies of the people, now so frequently exercised, was at that time but imperfectly understood. The Court, therefore, were not to be diverted by any apprehension of popular disapprobation. The act of Williams and his church, in thus presuming to appeal from the decision of the magistrates to the tribunal of public sentiment, seemed to them little less than open rebellion; and at the next meeting of the Court,

---

\* Master John Cotton's *Reply to Roger Williams*.

† The first newspaper in the American colonies was commenced at Boston, in 1704. It was called "The Boston News-Letter."



the deputies of Salem were deprived of their seats until the letter had been satisfactorily explained, and ample apology had been made for their participation in its authorship and doctrines.

The town of Salem submitted to the disfranchisement, and its deputies made the apology which was demanded, though not till after Mr. Endicott, the principal deputy, had suffered imprisonment for his adherence to the doctrines of the letter. Williams, at this juncture, addressed another letter to his church, urging them to renounce all communion with the other churches of the colony; but they had been humbled by the magistrates, and refused any longer to second the views of their teacher.

When, on a former occasion, in his treatise concerning the patent, he had been charged by the Court with disowning his allegiance to the King, he had explained his views, and had given his book to the Governor to be burned. But now his principles and his conduct required no explanation, and by him, at least, they were not to be retracted. They were the deepest-seated principles of his moral nature, and could be surrendered only with existence itself. Alone in his maintenance of them, when his townsmen and his church had all yielded to the mandate of power, and deserted him; when even his wife.

it may be fearing the consequences that were already threatening her family, added her entreaties, and even her reproaches, to swell the tide that was setting against him; he stands boldly forth, the sublimest moral object of the time, and calmly waits the storm that is fiercely driving towards him. The ministers, with Mr. Cotton and Mr. Hooker at their head, sent a committee to Salem, to deal with him, and censure him; but he disowned their spiritual jurisdiction, and declared himself "ready to be bound, and banished, and even to die in New England," rather than renounce the clear convictions, which had been fastened more firmly upon his understanding by the persecutions he had suffered. He felt that a great principle was committed to him to maintain and defend; that "the removal of the yoke of soul-oppression" was worthy to task his best energies, and to call forth the costliest sacrifices. He plainly delighted himself with anticipating the results of the spiritual freedom for which he was contending, and pictured to his imagination the blessings that would follow in its train; and he bound himself to the conclusion, expressed in his own strong language, that, "as it will prove an act of mercy and righteousness to the enslaved nations, so it is of binding force to engage the whole and every interest and con-



science to preserve the common liberty and peace."

The controversy having arrived at a crisis like this, the ministers, at the request of the court, assembled to consider his case, and to give their advice to the magistrates. They "professedly declared" that he deserved to be banished from the colony for maintaining the doctrine "that the civil magistrate might not intermeddle even to stop a church from apostasy and heresy," and that the churches ought to request the magistrates to remove him. Thus was the opinion of the ecclesiastical authorities plainly and fully declared, and the sentence of the civil power was not long delayed.

In July, he was summoned to Boston, to answer to the charges brought against him at the General Court, which was then in session. He was here, before the highest tribunal of the colony, solemnly charged with the *crime* of maintaining the following dangerous opinions. First, That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the civil peace. Secondly, That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man. Thirdly, That he ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, &c. Fourthly, That a man ought not to give thanks after sac-

raiment, nor after meat." \* These several charges may have represented his opinions very imperfectly ; but even supposing them to be perfectly accurate expressions of the views which he really entertained, they yet seem strange matters for the action of a civil tribunal of legislators and magistrates.

In the trial of Roger Williams, if trial it may be called, there appears to have been no examination of witnesses, and no hearing of counsel. In all the colony, there were none to raise a question of jurisdiction, save alone the individual accused ; and in raising this question his very crime consisted. The charges were the subject of long and serious debate, which terminated in allowing him and the church in Salem "time to consider these things till the next Général Court, and then, either to give satisfaction, or to expect the sentence." The interval, we may readily imagine, was a period of no common excitement among the churches and towns of Massachusetts Bay. The contest was one that could not fail to awaken the deepest interest among men entertaining views of government and religion like those prevalent among the early Puritans. On one side was arrayed the whole power of the civil government, supported by the

---

\* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 162.

united voice of the clergy, and by the general sentiment of the people; on the other was a single individual, a minister of the gospel, of distinguished talents and of blameless life, who yet had ventured to assert the freedom of conscience, and to deny the jurisdiction of any human authority in controlling its dictates or decisions. The purity of the churches, and the cause of sound doctrine, were thought to be in peril, and all waited with eager expectation to know the issue of this first schism that had sprung up among the Pilgrim bands of New England.

The next General Court was held in October, 1635. Mr. Williams was again summoned before the Court, and appeared for the last time. His opinions had not changed. He had been deserted by most of those, who at first had made common cause with him; but he still stood firm, the undaunted champion of the principles which he had espoused. The Court themselves were as little inclined to abandon the ground they had taken. Instructed by the advice they had received from the ministers, they decided, though not by a large majority of the members, that he should depart out of their jurisdiction within six weeks.

The following is the act of banishment, as it stands upon the colony records. "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the

church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates; as also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retractation; it is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing, which if he neglect to perform, it shall be lawful for the Governor and two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the Court."

The records also contain the following decree, which was passed at the same Court, and which serves to illustrate the inquisitorial spirit of the tribunal, which banished Roger Williams, and which, in so many other instances, asserted its jurisdiction over the thoughts and the opinions of men. "Mr. Samuel Sharpe is enjoined to appear at the next particular Court, to answer for the letter, that came from the church of Salem, as also *to bring the names of those that will justify the same*, or else to acknowledge his offence under his own hand, for his own particular." \*

The sentence of banishment was passed on

---

\* Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 167, note

the 3d of November; all the ministers, save one, approving it. Though it must have been anticipated, and perhaps even hoped for, yet its final passage was productive of no small reaction and excitement among the more quiet citizens and the sober-minded laymen of the colony. Especially in Salem, it is said, the whole community was in an uproar. The time was soon after extended so as to allow him to remain till spring. But his presence was soon found to endanger too much the orthodoxy of the people. It was complained to the Court, that he still persisted in maintaining and uttering his opinions; that many of the people, "taken with an apprehension of his godliness," resorted to his house to listen to his teachings, and that he was preparing to withdraw with them from Massachusetts, and form a settlement upon Narragansett Bay.

The neighborhood of a new colony, thus founded upon the principles of Roger Williams, was the subject of no very agreeable anticipation to the fathers of Massachusetts; and upon receiving the information, they determined to send him to England, by a ship then lying in the harbor ready for sea.

For this purpose, he received another summons to attend the Court at Boston. It was now winter. His health was impaired by the



labors he had endured, and the excitements through which he had passed. Injustice and oppression, the desertion of his friends, and the hard speeches of his enemies, had wounded his spirit, though they had not imbittered the feelings of his heart. He sent an answer, refusing to obey the summons of the Court, which was borne to Boston by "divers of the people of Salem," alleging, at the same time, as a reason of his refusal, the ill health from which he was suffering.

But the magistrates were not thus to be defeated. They sent a small sloop, or pinnace, to Salem, with a warrant to Captain Underhill to apprehend him, and carry him on board the ship, which was to sail immediately for England. When, however, the officers went to his house, they found his wife and children, but he had already gone three days before.

Had the warrant of the magistrates found him still in Salem, the name of Roger Williams would have been linked with far other scenes and achievements than those with which it is now forever associated. He would have been transported back to England, and, instead of becoming the founder of a state in the American confederacy, and passing his life in the comparative obscurity of a New England settlement, he might have vindicated the cause



of freedom in the British Parliament, and become a sharer in the triumphs and defeats through which it passed in that age of revolution and crime; in England, as in America, he would still have asserted the same great principles; and history might have blazoned his brilliant deeds, and recorded his name with those of Hampden, and Milton, and Sir Henry Vane, his friends and illustrious compeers in the same noble cause.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

*His Wanderings after his Banishment. — He visits Massasoit, and begins a Settlement at Seekonk. — He crosses the River, and lays the Foundations of Providence.*

It was in circumstances like these, that the founder of Rhode Island was compelled to leave the colony, to which he had fled to escape the yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny in England. It was like a second exile, rendered the more difficult to be borne, because of the hands by which it was forced upon him, and the wintry solitude into which it drove him forth.

The approbation which the ministers gave to the act by which he was banished, was much more nearly unanimous than the vote of the magistrates by which it had been passed. Indeed, the whole proceeding had its origin in a mistaken, though, doubtless, sincere regard for the interests of religion. Though the language of the sentence charges him with defamation of the magistrates, yet it was only in denying their jurisdiction in matters of conscience, and in condemning their unjust proceedings, that this defamation consisted. It was not pretended that he had violated any law, that he had been guilty of any immoral act, or even that he had proved faithless to any trust, either as a minister or a citizen; his opinions were his only crimes, and for these, and these alone, did the Court of Massachusetts decide to send him from their jurisdiction.

From the narrative which has already been given, it is plain that the head and front of his offending consisted in his maintaining, that the civil magistrate has no right to interfere with religious opinions. Of the truth of this principle, and of its paramount importance to the well-being of society, there is no longer any room for question. It is now the cherished sentiment of the people of this country, and is rapidly extending its sway throughout the Prot-

estant world. In the mind of Roger Williams, even at an early period of life, it was clearly conceived, and earnestly pressed to its legitimate results; though it was there mingled with other opinions, with which it had no natural connection. It may also be admitted, that, while in Massachusetts, he advocated his principle with too urgent a zeal, and with too little regard for the prevailing opinions of the age; but, after making every allowance that either justice or charity can claim, his banishment must still be regarded as an arbitrary proceeding, utterly without foundation either in justice or in state necessity. It was the offspring of a principle that would justify every species of tyranny, and it will forever remain among the few spots that tarnish the escutcheon of Massachusetts, otherwise radiant with unnumbered virtues.

At the period to which this narrative relates, how different was the aspect of New England from that which she now presents! From the shores of Massachusetts Bay to the shores of the Narragansett, is now a pleasant excursion of a few hours, through busy villages and cultivated fields, and across a region diversified everywhere with the innumerable occupations and the ever-cheerful sights and sounds of civilized life. But, at the time of Roger Wil-

liams's banishment, none of these had even begun to be. The only settlements of white men, in the district now comprising the states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire, were scattered along the coast from Cape Cod to Portsmouth. The colonists, in that early day, had seldom travelled far into the interior. The whole extent of country stretching northward from the ocean, between Boston or Plymouth on the east, and the Pawtucket or Seekonk River on the west, now embracing several thickly-peopled counties of the state of Massachusetts, was then a wide wilderness, interspersed with thick forests, and presenting scarcely a single dwelling of civilized man.

It was in January, 1636, the sternest month of a New England winter, when Roger Williams left his wife and babes in Salem, in order to escape the warrant, that would have conducted him to the ship then waiting to bear him to England. He went forth an exiled man, to trust his life and fortunes to the rough chances of the wilderness, that then skirted the colonies of Plymouth and of Massachusetts Bay. Seldom has an exile for opinion's sake been driven from a Christian community to encounter more severe necessities, or endure more crushing privations. He was without companions, and without a place of refuge from the severities of the

pitiless season. Though he has left no detailed account of his wanderings, yet here and there a scattered allusion, in his writings, tells us how wretched must have been his exiled condition. In a letter to his friend Major Mason, written thirty-five years afterwards, he speaks of still feeling its effects. "I was sorely tossed," says he, "for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean."\*

In the absence of authentic narrative, the imagination calls up the desolate aspect of New England two hundred years ago, and pictures the scene of his "sorrowful flight." Before him spread the wide forest, covered with the deep snows of midwinter, tracked by wild beasts, whose numbers and ferocity civilization had not yet diminished, and diversified only by occasional groups of the inhospitable dwellings of the Indians. Behind him were his family and his home, in the settlements from which he had been banished for conscience' sake. Provided only with the poorest means of subsistence, separated from the commonest charities

---

\* Upon this period in the life of the father of Rhode Island, one of the gifted sons of that state has founded the epic narrative of "*What Cheer, or Roger Williams in Banishment*," an historical poem of unusual fidelity to history, and containing passages of great beauty and pathos.



of civilized life, how heavily must those dreary weeks have rolled away! The winter's storm roars in the forest, the howl of the wolf and the scream of the panther are borne upon the blast; but his only shelter is a hollow tree, or the comfortless cabins of the savages. Yet this outcast man, whom rulers had banished, whom churches and clergy had proscribed, bears with him, in his desert wanderings, a great doctrine of Christian ethics, an eternal principle of civil right, of inestimable importance to all mankind. He alone comprehends it in its true significance; and, as an apostle commissioned from Heaven, he alone has preached it to a blind and bigoted age. If he perishes amidst the fury of the storm, or from the rage of wild beasts, or of savage men, there is not another in New England, perhaps not in Christendom, who fully comprehends it, and dares assert it.

But he was not destined thus to perish. In the days of his prosperity, he had assiduously cultivated the friendship of the Indians, who visited the settlements of the colonists. He had thus acquired the use of their language, and now, in his time of need, when he presented himself at their squalid cabins, a houseless wanderer, they received him to their rude hospitality. "These ravens," says he, "fed me in the wilderness." And, in after life, he ever ac-



knowledge, with pious, gratitude, the Providence that watched over him, and protected him amidst the sufferings and perils through which he passed.

Of the incidents that befell him in his solitary wanderings, after leaving Salem, a few words will suffice to tell all that can be gleaned from his writings; and this is to be gathered rather from incidental allusions than from any narrative he has left. These are found mainly in the letter to Major Mason, to which reference has already been made. It bears date at Providence, June 22d, 1670, and makes mention of the following interesting fact, that serves to show how the spirit of humanity, at least in some of the Massachusetts magistrates, struggled with the perverted sense of duty, which dictated his banishment. At the time of his leaving Salem, Governor Winthrop, who, the year before, had been supplanted in the chief magistracy of the colony by Thomas Dudley,\* wrote to Williams "to steer his course to the Narragansett Bay and Indians," as a region as yet unappropriated by any of the patents of the King. "I took," says he, "his prudent motion as a hint and voice from God; and, waiving all

---

\* Mr. Haynes, the successor of Dudley, was Governor when Williams was banished.

other thoughts and motions, I steered my course from Salem, (though in winter snow, which I feel yet,) unto these parts, wherein I may say, *Peniel*; I have seen the face of God."

It would appear that, when he fled from Salem, he made his way through the forest to the lodges of the Pokanokets, who occupied the country north from Mount Hope as far as Charles River. Ousemaguin, or Massasoit, the famous chief of this tribe, had known Mr. Williams when he lived in Plymouth, and had often received presents and tokens of kindness at his hands; and now, in the days of his friendless exile, the aged chief welcomed him to his cabin at Mount Hope, and extended to him the protection and aid he required. He granted to him a tract of land on the Seekonk River, to which, at the opening of spring, he repaired, and where "he pitched and began to build and plant."\* At this place, also, at the same time, he was joined by a number of his friends from Salem. Here he doubtless thought his wanderings were ended, and, with the friends who had come to share his exile, he hoped to plant a settlement that should be free forever from

---

\* The spot, which was selected as the site of the new settlement, is near the beautiful bend in the river, now known as "Manton's Cove," a short distance above the upper bridge, directly eastward of Providence.

“the yoke of soul-oppression,” which the authorities of Massachusetts Bay had sought to fasten on their necks.

But scarcely had the first dwelling been raised in the new settlement, scarcely had the corn, which they had planted, appeared above the ground, when he was again disturbed, and obliged to move still further from Christian neighbors and the dwellings of civilized men. “I received a letter,” says he, “from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, then Governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others’ love and respect for me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loth to displease the Bay, to remove but to the other side of the water; and then, he said, I had the country before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together.” \*

With the advice given him in this friendly manner, and apparently without any sinister design, his experience had now taught him the wisdom to comply. He accordingly soon abandoned the fields which he had planted, and the dwelling he had begun to build, and embarked in a canoe upon the Seekonk River, in quest of another spot, where, unmolested, he might rear

---

\* Letter to Mason. *Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. p. 275.

a home and plant a separate colony. There were five others, who, having joined him at Seekonk, bore him company in the excursion in which he thus went forth to become the founder of a city and a state. Tradition has handed down, among the sons of these earliest citizens of Rhode Island, the course and incidents of their singular voyage. As the little bark, thus freighted with the fortunes of a future state, was borne along on the waters of the Seekonk, Williams was greeted by some Indians, from the heights that rise on the western banks of the stream, with the friendly salutation, '*What cheer, Netop? What cheer?*' and first came to land at the spot now called *Slate Rock*, in the rear of the mansion of His Excellency Governor Fenner.\*

After exchanging salutations with the Indians, and, as is probable, obtaining some additional information concerning the country which stretched, in summer's 'beauty, before him, he again embarked, and, coasting along the stream, passed

---

\* The adjacent estate still bears the name of "What-cheer." This land, Roger Williams says, he planted with his own hands; and by him it was conveyed to James Ellis, who soon after sold it to Arthur Fenner, the first of the ancient and respected family to whom it has ever since belonged. *Netop* means "friend." Williams's *Key*, p. 2.

round the headlands, now known as Fox Point, and India Point, up the harbor, to the mouth of the Mooshausic River. Here he landed, and, upon the beautiful slope of the hill that ascends from the river, he descried the spring around which he commenced the first "plantations of Providence."

It was in the latter part of June, 1636, as well as can be ascertained, that Roger Williams and his companions began the settlement at the mouth of the Mooshausic River. A little distance north of what is now the centre of the city, the spring is still pointed out, which drew the attention of the humble voyagers from Seekonk. Here, after so many wanderings, was the weary exile to find a home, and to lay the foundations of a city, which should be a perpetual memorial of pious gratitude to the superintending Providence which had protected him and guided him to the spot. How changed is the scene in the lapse of two hundred years! Art and Wealth have covered with their beautiful mansions the hill-side that rose in luxuriant verdure before him, and Learning has erected her halls upon its summit. The solitary place has become a thickly-peopled city, the abode of wealth and of elegance, and, instead of the deep silence of nature, that then reigned over the



scene, there are now heard, over hill, and plain, and water, the hum of the spindle, the bustle of trade, and the cheerful murmurs of busy life.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

*The principal Indian Tribes of New England. — Williams's Intercourse with them. — His Views of their Rights, and his Influence with them. — Freedom of the Colony at Providence. — Its Government limited to civil Things. — Circumstances in which Williams is placed.*

OF the numerous Indian tribes that occupied the territory of New England at the period of its first settlement by the whites, the most important were the Pokanokets, the Pequots, with their tributaries, the Mohegans, and the Narragansetts. The Pokanokets were scattered from Mount Hope, over the region now comprised in the counties of Bristol and Plymouth, in the state of Massachusetts. This tribe, like most of the others on the coast, had been greatly reduced by the ravages of the pestilence, which, a short period before the arrival of the English, had swept away such multitudes of the



aboriginal race. The Pequots and Mohegans possessed the greater part of the state of Connecticut. They were the fiercest and most warlike of all the New England tribes, and in their intercourse with the English, they perpetually manifested their treacherous and hostile spirit. They were confident of their own strength, and embraced, with savage eagerness, every opportunity which presented itself to avenge the encroachments, which the strangers were gradually making upon their native domain.

The Narragansetts held beneath their sway the greater part of what is now the state of Rhode Island, together with the islands of the bay, and a portion of Long Island. Though shy of the English, they were the most intelligent and civilized, the most generous and faithful, of all the New England Indians. They had cultivated agriculture, and others of the simpler arts of life, and were also the manufacturers of nearly all the *wampumpeag* in use among the natives as money. They were a numerous and powerful tribe; and, though they had gradually lost their savage relish for war, they still could muster from four to five thousand fighting men from their own and the tributary tribes.

The language of the several tribes of New England seems to have been essentially the same. Indeed, Roger Williams himself informs

us, that, with his knowledge of the Narragansett tongue, he "had entered into the secrets of those countries wherever the English dwell, about two hundred miles, between the French and Dutch plantations ;" and he adds, that "with this help a man may converse with thousands of the Indians all over the country." It is probable, also, that the same language, though with the modifications of various dialects, extended among the tribes of New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. This singular, and, as it has been represented, exceedingly copious and versatile language has been made the subject of much curious inquiry among the philologists of our own and of other lands. The people who spoke it have long since vanished from the hills and forests of New England ; but the language itself has survived them in the pious though humble labors of their benefactors. Specimens of its endless words and its unique structure are still to be found in the "Key," which Williams wrote, in the "Grammar" of John Eliot, and especially in the few scattered copies that remain of the Indian Bible, which the noble-minded apostle toiled away the best years of his life in translating.

With these several tribes, whose names and localities we have thus incidentally mentioned, Mr. Williams, during the remainder of his life

was thrown into frequent, and, in some instances, most intimate association. He was always their friend, the vindicator of their rights, the interpreter of their treaties, and the pacificator of their quarrels. He thus acquired an influence over them far superior to that of any other person of his time.

The spot at which he had landed, and where he began to plant the new settlement, was within the territory belonging to the Narragansetts. Canonicus, the aged chief of the tribe, and Miantonomo, his nephew, had visited the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay, while Williams resided there, and had learned to regard him, in virtue of his being a minister, as one of the sachems of the English. He had also taken special pains to conciliate their good-will and gain their confidence, and "spared no cost towards them, in tokens and presents to Canonicus and all his, many years before he came to Narragansett in person." Indeed, there is reason to believe, that, at an early period after his arrival in New England, on finding himself so widely at variance with his Puritan brethren, he conceived the design of withdrawing from the colonies, and settling among the Indians, that he might labor as a missionary for their civilization and conversion to Christianity; and for this purpose, as it would appear, he then had "several

treaties" with the Narragansett sachems, and received from them the promise of a tract of land within their jurisdiction. The design of removing thither he probably ceased to entertain some time before his banishment; yet now, when he was driven into the territory of the friendly sachems, he avails himself of the promise they had formerly made, and receives from them a grant of the land at Providence, on which he had settled with his companions.

In all his dealings with the Indians, Mr. Williams was governed by a strict regard to the rights, which, he had always contended, belonged to them as the sole proprietors of the soil. He justly conceived that it belonged to them alone to give away the lands, which they and their fathers had occupied for centuries. In accordance with this principle, the assertion of which had given so much offence in Massachusetts, he waits for no patent from the King to confer upon him, as a favor from his majesty, the territory he sought to possess, but goes directly to the great sachems of the country, and purchases of them a clear title to the lands "lying upor the two fresh rivers, called Mooshausic and Wanasquatucket." The sachems, also, in consideration of his many kindnesses and services to them, ceded to him, as a gratuity, all the land lying between the above-named rivers

and the Pawtuxet. The terms of these grants are sufficiently general to give rise, in these days, to endless litigation ; and, at different periods in the early history of the town, they were productive of no little uncertainty and dispute. It must be admitted that they reflect but little credit on the legal education, which the founder of Rhode Island is said to have pursued under the direction of Sir Edward Coke.

Of the settlement at Providence Roger Williams was the earliest projector, and the sole negotiator with the Indians. It was by his influence, and at his expense, that the purchase was procured from Canonicus and Miantonomo, who partook largely of the shyness and jealousy of the English so common to their tribe. He says, "It was not thousands nor tens of thousands of money, that could have bought of them an English entrance into this bay." It was done by "that language, acquaintance, and favor with the natives," which he had acquired, and which he knew so well how to use. He was, in every sense, the father of the infant colony. By great charge and travel, he secured the land on which it was planted, and established a loving and peaceable neighborhood with the sachems around, by presents and gratuities, of which he also sustained the cost. In order to raise the funds needed for this purpose, and for removing his



wife and family to the new settlement, he was obliged to mortgage his house and land in Salem.

Unlike the Pilgrims, who had organized their commonwealth simply for securing liberty for their own faith and worship, Roger Williams, in framing the organization of the new colony, did not lose sight of the great principle of spiritual freedom, for which he had contended while in Massachusetts. This principle was as broad as humanity itself, and he did not fail to perceive its application to others, as readily and clearly as to himself. The persons who accompanied him from Seekonk, and the others who soon after joined him at Providence, came without any solicitation from him; yet he received them with the utmost kindness. He prescribed to them no conditions of their admission to the colony, and exercised over them no personal control, but freely shared with them all that the friendship of the Indians had given him to bestow. By the deeds of the sachems of Narragansett, the lands at Providence were conveyed to him alone, and "were his as much as any man's coat upon his back." He might have retained them as his own permanent fee, and, like the founders of Pennsylvania and Maryland, having secured them by a charter from the King, he might have contin-



ued the unquestioned proprietary of the entire domain. He thus might have amassed wealth and dignities, and bequeathed them as a legacy to his children.

Such, however, was not the policy which he adopted. He desired that the new settlement might be "for a shelter for persons distressed for conscience," and he welcomed with an open hand all who came to him for refuge. He chose to found the infant commonwealth in the simple principles of pure democracy, and reserved to himself no more either of authority or of land than he freely distributed to his associates. Though, in procuring the land, he had probably parted with the whole of his little property, he yet gave it all, as a free gift, to the persons who had united with him in forming the settlement. The town subsequently voted him the sum of thirty pounds, not as purchase money, or as compensation for his services and expenditures, but as "a loving gratuity," which, however, was to be paid from the common fund appointed to be created by the payment of thirty shillings by each person, who should subsequently be admitted a member of the colony.

Thus was the first settlement within the territory of Rhode Island commenced, in the spirit of generous liberality and mutual confidence, and with the utmost degree of personal free-

dom that can consist with the existence of civil society. The little community thrived beneath the genial influence of unrestricted freedom; it was gradually enlarged by emigrations from the neighboring colonies and from England; for the ships that now covered the Bay of Massachusetts came crowded with emigrants to the new world. They bore to the shores of New England, not the motley throng of homeless and wretched beings, who now crowd the steerage of our packet ships, but mainly the intelligent and the virtuous, who had been persecuted for conscience' sake, and who preferred a life of exile to the disabilities and privations to which they were subjected at home. Among them were often found persons of superior education, and of large estates, mingled with the adventurous spirits, who sought in the distant colonies a freer range of action and opinion, and a wider sphere of enterprise. Many of these came to the plantations at Providence, where the opinions and conduct of individuals were the least subjected to the scrutiny of the public.

The persons who thus joined the settlement of Roger Williams bound themselves to conform to the principles on which it had been founded, and also to be governed by the orders and agreements of the majority. They were admitted to the fellowship of the settlers by sub-

scribing the following instrument, which stands without date in the earliest records of the colony, and was undoubtedly the first form of civil government which the inhabitants adopted.

“We, whose names are here underwritten, being desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to submit ourselves, in active or passive obedience, to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families, incorporated together into a township, and such others whom they shall admit into the same, only in civil things.”

This earliest form of the social compact, adopted by the settlers at Providence, is remarkable alike for its simplicity, and for the entire freedom it guaranties to each individual in every sphere of life, save *in civil things* alone. It embodies the principle for which Roger Williams had contended ever since his arrival in America, and for the maintenance of which he had been persecuted by the Court of Massachusetts, and, it is believed, is the first form of government recorded in history that contains an express practical recognition of the rights of conscience. This instrument was undoubtedly written by the father of the colony himself. It breathes his spirit, and bears the im-

press of his character. While it expressly limits the power of the body politic to the civil relations of the people, it at the same time carefully guards against any exaggerated notions or wild misapplications of personal freedom, by strictly binding every individual to obey the orders and agreements of the majority of the "masters of families." It was the perfection of civil freedom, without any alloy of licentiousness, while it left the conscience undisturbed in its allegiance to God alone. The spirit, which was thus infused into the government and social organization of the colony, at the very beginning of its existence, has never ceased to characterize the legislation of Rhode Island; and, to this day, its influence is still felt among the people. It is a prominent fact in her history, that her citizens have ever been distinguished for the vigilance with which they have watched over the rights of conscience; and not a single act of religious intolerance has ever disgraced the statute-book of the state. While, it may be, in other things she has learned salutary lessons from her sister states, in this respect, at least, they are largely indebted to the success of her experiment, and the influence of her well-sustained example.\*

---

\* See APPENDIX, No. I.

The government of the town remained in the hands of its citizens, and was administered in the simple forms of a pure democracy for a number of years. No mention is found, in the records, of any authority delegated to individuals by the body politic before the year 1640.\* No officers were appointed, except a town treasurer; for none was needed, since every question affecting the public weal, whether of a legislative or a judicial character, could well be arbitrated in the assembly of the people. This feature in the organization of the new society was a novelty among the settlements of New England, and gave rise to the reproach, that the settlers at Providence were opposed to magistrates. But the fact was far otherwise. Amidst the simple forms and harmonious interests of a newly-planted community, that claimed no jurisdiction in matters of opinion, the office of magistrate would have been little else than a needless sinecure. The "orders and agreements of the majority" determined the action of each individual, and it is not improbable that the personal influence of their leader often proved an efficient aid in allaying the bickerings and strifes, that sprang up among the citizens of the little commonwealth. The numer-

---

\* Staples's *Annals of Providence*.



ous declarations in his writings, pertaining to the subject, and the public acts of his life, show that he fully understood the principles of civil government, and clearly perceived the eternal distinction that subsists between real freedom and the specious but worthless theories that arrogate its name.

In this humble manner were laid the foundations of the settlement at Providence, and the earliest beginnings of the state of Rhode Island. But other and more pressing necessities, than that of providing for the well-being of the town, must also have claimed the attention of its founder, even during the first months of its existence. He had been obliged to leave the fields he had planted at Seekonk, just as the corn was appearing above the ground; and when he arrived at the mouth of the Mooshausic, it was already too late to raise a harvest from the lands he there purchased of the Indians. The crops he might have raised by the labors of husbandry were thus in a great measure cut off; and, occupied as he must have been during the remainder of the season, he could have done but little towards providing for the wants of his family. A dwelling was to be reared, and the comforts of civilized life were to be gathered, upon a spot till now never trodden by white men. The summer was already far advanced,

and, as he looked forward to the approach of winter, he must have beheld, in the distance, the hungry forms of poverty and want hastening towards his door. He was shut out from all intercourse with the towns of Massachusetts Bay, and must have depended, for the subsistence of his family, mainly upon his casual success in fishing, or upon the scanty supplies of the Indians.

In the course of the autumn, he was visited by Governor Winslow, of Plymouth, of whom he speaks as "a great and pious soul," and who, as he gratefully acknowledges, "put a piece of gold into the hands of his wife for their supply;" an incident which, especially when taken in connection with his own touching allusion to it, shows how nearly he was exposed to "necessity's sharp pinch." His straitened circumstances were doubtless rendered the more aggravated and difficult to be borne, by the consideration that they were brought about by the foolish and bigoted legislation of men, with whom he had made a common cause in coming to New England for conscience' sake, who themselves were exiles, and had tasted the bitter sorrows of a life in the wilderness. It would not have been strange, considering the weakness of our nature, had the treatment which he received from Massachusetts Bay, and the severe privations that

followed from it, embittered his spirit, and shrouded it in the sullen glooms of settled hostility to the magistrates and elders of that colony. But no such result was produced in the mind of Roger Williams. He harbored no feelings of revenge for the injuries he had received. He seems only to have pitied the weakness and regretted the delusion from which they sprang; and he employed the first opportunity, that was presented to him, in requiting the people, who had persecuted and banished him, with the amplest benefits and the noblest self-sacrifices.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The Pequot War. — The Services Williams renders the Government of Massachusetts. — His Agency saves the Colonies from Destruction. — His Letter to Governor Winthrop. — Issue of the War. — Manner in which his Services are regarded by Massachusetts.*

SELDOM does the page of history glow with a brighter illustration of the spirit of forgiveness, and of Christian magnanimity, than is presented in the conduct of Roger Williams towards the

authorities of Massachusetts, immediately after his banishment, and while the recollection of his wrongs was yet fresh in his mind. The circumstances, as will appear from the narrative, were those of extreme peril; and the founder of Providence was the only person, who could avert the calamities that threatened to overwhelm the English settlements in New England. Had he then been wanting in the noblest impulses of generosity and duty, the settlements of the early Pilgrims of Plymouth and Massachusetts might have been destroyed amidst the horrors of Indian massacre and conflagration.

The Pequot Indians, who, as we have already stated, had always proved treacherous and hostile to the English, now threatened a universal insurrection, for the purpose of driving them forever from the lands they had acquired. In the summer of 1636, they attacked a party of traders in a sloop, near Block Island, and murdered John Oldham, one of the company; and, having buried the hatchet with all the neighboring tribes, were endeavoring to unite them in a general league, for the entire extermination of the colonies. The frustration of their designs of savage vengeance, and the preservation of New England from the merciless atrocities of Indian war, were accomplished by Roger Williams. Upon receiving intelligence of the mur-

der of Oldham, and the designs of the Pequots, a few weeks after his removal to Providence, he was the first to communicate the information to the Governor of Massachusetts. And to him, whom they had so recently driven into exile, and who was still under the ban of their proscription, did the authorities of the colony commit the work of conciliating the Indians, and preventing the league, which might have brought desolation and bloodshed to all their homes.

Mr. Williams accepted the hazardous and difficult commission of mediating with the Narragansetts, by whose example the course of the other tribes would be governed, and of opposing the influence and designs of the Pequots. It was an enterprise of no common difficulty and peril, and it is not claiming too much for his influence with the Indians, to say, that he was the only man in New England who could have successfully executed it. In his letter to Major Mason, he mentions the leading incidents connected with the undertaking, and we follow the simple narrative he there gives. Upon receiving letters from Governor Vane, requesting him to use his utmost and speediest endeavors to hinder and break the league, he embarks alone, without delay, in his canoe, scarcely informing his wife of the perilous voyage, and hastens over the troubled waters of the Narragansett,



“cutting through a stormy wind and great seas, every minute in hazard of life,” to the dwellings of Canonicus and Miantonomo. The Pequot ambassadors were already there, urging every consideration that could arouse the vengeance of these high-spirited though generous chiefs. They pictured before them the gloomy destiny, that was already settling down upon the Indian race, and pointed out to them the means by which the ancient possessors of the soil might regain the domain they had lost, and drive the white men from the country. The influences thus brought to bear upon their minds were well calculated to rouse the hostile feelings of a jealous and suspicious race, and the Narragansetts were already wavering.

In the midst of the savage passions thus powerfully at work in the hearts of the Indians, Williams passed three days and nights at the sachem's house, mingling with the Pequot ambassadors, whose hands were still reeking with the blood of the English they had slain, and “from whom he nightly looked for their bloody knives at his own throat also.” But his arduous and perilous mission was crowned with success. The sachems, whose friendship he had long before acquired, yielded to his counsels. He was enabled to “break in pieces the Pequot negotiation and design, and to make and finish,

by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansetts and Mohegans against the Pequots."

The treaty, the terms of which were thus arranged by the negotiations of Mr. Williams with the Narragansetts, was ratified by the two contracting parties, at Boston, in October, 1636. Miantonomo, the chief of the tribe, and two sons of Canonicus, with a large number of attendants, made a visit, at the time, to the authorities of Massachusetts Bay, by whom they were received with much parade and demonstration of respect, and with whom they established a perpetual alliance of offence and defence against the hostile Pequots, that was to be binding alike upon themselves and their posterity. The treaty was at first written in the English language; but, the Indians finding it difficult to understand it, from the imperfect explanations the magistrates were able to give, it was sent, probably at their own request, to Providence, to be interpreted to them by Mr. Williams; a fact, which demonstrates the confidence placed in his integrity and friendship by both Indians and English.

Thus was the whole negotiation dependent upon him alone. He broke the league which the Pequots were striving to form, and saved the feeble settlements of New England from the hor-

rors of a universal savage war. He arranged the terms of the treaty with the Narragansetts, and at last interpreted to them its language, and won for its stipulations the reluctant confidence of their suspicious natures. All this was effected, as he has informed us, only at great cost and travel, and at the sacrifice of many private interests, that were pressing themselves upon his attention. The pacification which he thus accomplished was more useful and more glorious than conquest, and was the fruit of a heroism not less worthy of admiration. It was achieved by the self-sacrificing exertions of a spirit too generous to remember its wrongs, and too elevated to think of its own necessities.

But the services of Roger Williams to the people, who had banished him, did not end here. The Pequots, though foiled in their attempts to establish a league with the neighboring tribes, could not be dissuaded from their purposes of vengeance. With them the only question was, whether they should wait, in sullen inaction, the slow progress of the extinction which they foresaw was their inevitable doom, or rush at once upon their enemies, and decide their destiny by a single onset of savage ferocity. They resolved upon the latter course, and, almost in the fury of desperation, determined single-handed to undertake the war. The murders which they per-

petrated, and the cruel tortures they inflicted upon some captives they seized, sent a chill of horror through the settlements of New England. The alarm was increased by their attack on the fort at Saybrook; and the three colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, and Connecticut resolved immediately to invade the territory of the Pequots, and, if possible, to destroy the tribe, who had vowed perpetual vengeance upon all the English.

During the war, which continued for nearly a year, Mr. Williams was the constant adviser of the colonies, especially of the authorities of Massachusetts Bay, in all the difficult questions that were presented for their decision, and the watchful guardian of all their interests in their relations with the friendly Indians. He received the troops that marched from Boston against the Pequots, under General Stoughton, and entertained them at his own house in Providence, and accompanied them to Narragansett in the expedition, when, at the request of the commander, he returned to be a medium of communication between the army and the people of the colony. He readily sacrificed every private interest, and periled his life in their cause. His devotion to their affairs could not have been more constant and faithful, had they never done him an injury, and had his happiness and his fame been identified with theirs.

His conduct, during the whole of this gloomy period in the history of New England, was such as entitles him to the perpetual gratitude of the people of Massachusetts; for he was the instrument in the hands of Providence of saving her and her sister colonies from utter destruction. The subjoined letter, written to his friend Governor Winthrop, in the course of the Pequot war, will serve to bring to view more fully the character of the services he rendered to the government at Boston.

“SIR,

“The latter end of the last week, I gave notice to our neighbor Princes of your intentions and preparations against the common enemy, the Pequots. At my first coming to them, *Canonicus (morosus æque ac barbarus senex)* was very sour, and accused the English and myself for sending the plague amongst them, and threatening to kill him especially.

“Such tidings, it seems, were lately brought to his ears by some of his flatterers and our ill-willers. I discerned cause of bestirring myself, and staid the longer, and at last, through the mercy of the Most High, I not only sweetened his spirit, but possessed him that the plague and other sicknesses were alone in the hand of the one God who made him and us, who, being dis-



pleased with the English for lying, stealing, idleness, and uncleanness, (the natives' epidemical sins,) smote many thousands of us ourselves, with general and late mortalities.

"Miantonomo kept his barbarous court lately at my house, and with him I have far better dealing. He takes some pleasure to visit me, and sent me word of his coming over again some eight days hence. They pass not a week without some skirmishes, though hitherto little loss on either side. They were glad of your preparations, and in much conference with themselves and others, (fishing, *de industriâ*, for instructions from them,) I gathered these observations, which you may please, as cause may be, to consider and take notice of;

"1. They conceive, that to do execution to purpose on the Pequots will require, not two or three days and away, but a riding by it, and following of the work, to and again, the space of three weeks or a month; that there be a falling off and a retreat, as if you were departed, and a falling ~~on~~ again, within three or four days, when they are returned again to their houses securely from their flight.

"2. That, if any pinnaces come in ken, they presently prepare for flight, women, and old men, and children, to a swamp, some three or four miles on the back of them, a marvellous great

and secure swamp, which they called *Ohomowauke*, which signifies owl's nest, and by another name, *Cappacommock*, which signifies a refuge or hiding-place, as I conceive.

“3. That, therefore, Niantick (which is Mi-antonomo's place of rendezvous) be thought on for the riding and retiring to of vessel or vessels, which place is faithful to the Narragansetts, and at present enmity with the Pequots.

“4. They also conceive it easy for the English, that the provisions and munitions first arrive at Aquetneck, called by us Rhode Island, at the Narragansett's mouth, and then a messenger may be despatched hither, and so to the Bay, for the soldiers to march up by land to the vessels, who otherwise might spend long time about the cape, and fill more vessels than needs.

“5. That the assault should be in the night, when they are commonly more secure and at home, by which advantage, the English, being armed, may enter the houses, and do what execution they please.

“6. That, before the assault be given, an ambush be laid behind them, between them and the swamp, to prevent their flight, &c.

“7. That, to that purpose, such guides as shall be best liked of, be taken along to direct, especially two Pequots, viz., Wequash and Wutackquiackommin, valiant men, especially the

latter, who have lived there three or four years with the Narragansetts, and know every pass and passage among them, who desire armor to enter their houses.

“8. That it would be pleasing to all natives that women and children be spared, &c.

“9. That, if there be any more land travel to Connecticut, some course would also be taken with the Wunnashowatuckoogs, who are confederates with and a refuge to the Pequots.

“Sir, if any thing be sent to the Princes, I find that Canonicus would gladly accept of a box of eight or ten pounds of sugar, and, indeed, he told me he would thank Mr. Governor for a box full.

“Sir, you may please to take notice of a rude view how the Pequots lie. [Here follows, in the original, a map of the Pequot and Mohegan country.]

“Thus with my best salutes to your worthy selves, and loving friends with you, and daily cries to the Father of mercies for a merciful issue to all these enterprises, I rest,

“Your worship’s unfeignedly respective,

“ROGER WILLIAMS.”

The Pequot war was terminated by the celebrated battle fought near the fort on Mystic River, in May, 1637. It ended only in the

extinction of the race. The forces of the English, that were engaged in the battle, were the troops of Connecticut, with about twenty men from Massachusetts, and some hundreds of friendly Indians, the whole under the command of Major Mason, who had received the ensigns of authority at Hartford, from the fathers of the colony, amidst the solemn services of religion.

A few days after the battle, the remaining troops, under General Stoughton, arrived from Massachusetts, and the few scattered bands of the Pequots were hunted from their hiding-places. Every village was destroyed, every field was laid waste, and the surviving remnant of the race, about two hundred in number, surrendering to their subjugators, were either sold into slavery by the colonists, or merged in the tribes that surrounded them. Their warriors had nearly all perished in battle. Sassacus, their principal sachem, was treacherously murdered by the Mohawks, to whom he had fled for protection. Not a single family remained to keep alive the Pequot name in the land of their ancestors. It was the beginning of the work of Indian extermination, which has since been so fearfully consummated. It conveyed a terrible lesson of the power of the English, but one that was justified, in most of its features, at least, by the circumstances in which the col-

onies were placed. They had done all in their power to avert the sad necessity ; but, when it could no longer be avoided, they determined to strike a blow that would not require to be repeated. It sent terror through all the tribes of New England, and secured the peace of the country through an entire generation. The homes of the Pilgrims were safe from midnight marauders, their intercourse with the Indians was established on a friendly footing, and the pursuits of industry were crowned with liberal rewards beneath the genial auspices of protracted peace.

Thus ended the first of the hopeless struggles, which the natives of New England made to withstand the melancholy doom which they too plainly saw was approaching them. The circumstances of the case left to the settlers no other alternative than a war of utter extermination. The stern necessity that was placed upon them involved either their own destruction or the extinction of the treacherous and hostile tribe.

We have seen the part which Roger Williams bore in the whole course of the troubles with the Pequots, and may well conclude, that to his active agency and superior knowledge of the Indian character and language their successful issue may in no small degree be attrib-



uted. His perilous enterprise at the commencement of hostilities, and his indefatigable perseverance amidst all difficulties, secured the alliance of the Narragansetts, and his judicious counsels and accurate information dictated the plan and guided the progress of the campaign. The colony of Massachusetts Bay proclaimed a solemn thanksgiving at the close of the war, and received in triumph their General and his troops as they returned from the victory. But they passed no vote of thanks, and presented no civic rewards, to him, who had done for them what soldiers could not have effected, who had performed, in breaking the designs of the Pequots, what has been well pronounced to be "the most intrepid and most successful achievement in the whole war; an action as perilous in its execution as it was fortunate in its issue."\*

Some hearts, indeed, as he himself relates, were touched with relentings towards him; and even Governor Winthrop moved the question in the Council, and it was debated, whether he had not merited not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some mark of favor. "It is known," he significantly adds, "who hindered, who never promoted,

---

\* Bancroft's *History of the United States*, Vol. I. p. 399

the liberty of other men's consciences."\* The authorities basely suffered the occasion to pass by without any expression of gratitude for his services, or of the estimation in which they deserved to be held. The decree of banishment was never revoked, and the principles of the founder of Rhode Island were rendered scarcely less odious to the ministers and General Court of Massachusetts by his becoming the benefactor and savior of the colony. They were deemed prejudicial to the interests of religion, and, therefore, dangerous to the state; and no degree of private worth or amount of public services could atone for the heresy of his opinions. It is not strange that the natural feelings of some proved treacherous to the wretched fallacies in which their understandings were involved. The magistrates could accept his services to the state, and confide to his negotiation its most vital interests; but, as guar-

---

\* Letter to Mason. The allusion is to Governor Dudley, who was distinguished above some others of the magistrates for his zeal against heresy. The subject seems occasionally to have awaked "the indignant muse" within him. At his death, some verses, written in his own hand, were found upon his person, containing the following characteristic couplet;

"Let men of God, in court and churches, watch  
O'er such as do a toleration hatch."

dians of the popular faith, they could not allow him to step his foot within their jurisdiction, because he denied their authority in matters of conscience. So great was the perversion, which mistaken views of religious duty were suffered to work in the impulses and affections of the otherwise generous and noble-minded fathers of Massachusetts Bay.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

*Inadequacy of Legislation for the Suppression of Heresy. — Account of Mrs. Hutchinson and her Controversy in Massachusetts. — Her Adherents are received at Providence. — They settle on Rhode Island. — Williams's Agency in the Purchase of the Island. — Relations of the Colony at Providence with Massachusetts. — Account of Samuel Gorton. — His Settlement at Pawtuxet. — His Difficulties with the People of Providence.*

IF any illustrations were needed of the utter inefficiency of even the most watchful vigilance of the civil or ecclesiastical authorities, in securing uniformity of religious sentiment in the

minds of a people, they are presented, in the most striking manner, in the early history of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. The settlers at Salem, in the first year of their town, in their zeal for the Puritan faith, had sent home to England John and Samuel Browne, two of their leading and most enterprising fellow-emigrants, by the return of the very ship in which they arrived. Their offence consisted in setting up a worship in Salem according to the forms of the Common Prayer, and the liturgy of the established church. Thus was Episcopacy banished as soon as it appeared, and its leaders transported, like criminals, beyond the sea. Six years later, the General Court of the colony, guided by the advice of the clergy, had passed a decree of perpetual banishment against Roger Williams, for asserting the freedom of conscience. Many others, at different periods, had been summoned to the bar of the same tribunal, to answer for their opinions. Of these, some had given satisfactory explanations, while others had either voluntarily retired from Massachusetts, or been forced beyond her jurisdiction. Still strange opinions multiplied among the people, in spite of all the exertions that were made to suppress them, until, at a synod held at Cambridge, on the 30th of August, 1637, and attended by the ministers and magistrates

of the whole colony, there were found, to the dismay of the Puritans, not less than eighty-two errors in doctrine, requiring their condemnation.

Of these, by far the most important, and the most dreaded, were the principles at that time promulgated by Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who, in the summer of 1636, with her husband, had arrived at Boston. She was a woman of rare endowments of intellect, and brilliant qualities of both person and character. Her mind, tinged with a shade of fanaticism, was of that impassioned and fervid cast, which enabled her to clothe her peculiar doctrines in the charms of a fascinating eloquence, and easily to subject to her sway the opinions of those, who were not entirely quiescent beneath the despotism of the prevailing theology of the times. The character of her opinions, and the theological strife to which they gave occasion, have often been described in the histories of the period to which this narrative relates, and they need not here be repeated. The questions at issue were, in most respects, the same as have perplexed the minds and divided the opinions of Christians in every age of the church, and about which uniformity of sentiment is never to be hoped for. At this period, however, they broke out into a controversy in every way the most remarkable in our history, which raged for more than a



year, and was terminated only by the banishment of Mrs. Hutchinson, and some of her most influential adherents, and the subjection of the remainder to such restrictions and disabilities as eventually drove them from the colony.

This celebrated controversy was greatly protracted by the distinguished abilities and high standing of many of those, who espoused the cause of Mrs. Hutchinson. Boston was the principal seat of the new opinions. Governor Vane, at that time the chief magistrate of the colony, avowed himself on the side of the heresy, and actually wrote against the enactments which the Court had passed concerning it. Mr. Cotton, also, at whose house the Governor then resided, gave at least the indirect sanction of his influential name to the same views. But the only one among the clergy, who stood forth as a leader of the party, that thus rose in rebellion against the spiritual authorities of the age, was John Wheelwright, the brother of Mrs. Hutchinson. In a fast-day sermon, he had earnestly vindicated his doctrines, and, on being censured by the Court for sedition, had increased their exasperation against him by threatening to appeal to the King. A synod of the ministers and delegates of all the churches was called to pass judgment upon the questions, which thus divided the opinions of

the colony. After a protracted session of three weeks, during which time the numerous errors of doctrine reported to the synod were the subject of long and angry debate, they pronounced against them their decided condemnation. But the strife only became the more furious, and the denunciations of both parties the more vehement; until, at length, the General Court summoned to its bar Mrs. Hutchinson, and Mr. Wheelwright, and Mr. Aspinwall, the leading advocates of the heretical opinions, and placed them on trial for *heresy*. The trial resulted in the banishment of the persons named above from the jurisdiction of the colony. The magistrates, at the same time, proceeded to a measure still more remarkable. Upon the pretence of their having meditated an armed insurrection, in threatening to appeal to the King, the remaining adherents of Mrs. Hutchinson were required to give up the arms and ammunition in their possession, and were forbidden, upon penalty of a fine, to buy or borrow any others, until permitted by the Court.\* By this order, nearly sixty of the citizens of Boston, and many in the adjacent towns, were deprived of the right to keep fire-arms, enjoyed by the other inhabitants of the colony.

---

\* Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. 1. p. 247.

A large number of the people, who had been thus proscribed as heretics by the General Court, departed from Boston, under the guidance of John Clarke and William Coddington, with the intention of forming a settlement upon the shores of Delaware Bay. In their journey southward, they were kindly received and "lovingly entertained," at Providence, by Roger Williams, who advised them to settle on Narragansett Bay, and recommended either Sowams\* or Aquetneck as a suitable site for their plantation. In order to ascertain whether these places came within the patents of the neighboring colonies, the emigrants sent Mr. Williams, with a deputation of their company, to Plymouth, to make the necessary inquiries. At Plymouth they were told, that Sowams was "the garden of their patent," and were advised to go to Aquetneck, where they might plant a colony, and be free from the jurisdiction of any of their neighbors. Accordingly, on the return of the embassy to Providence, the emigrants decided to abandon their journey southward, and settle upon the beautiful island, whose luxuriant soil and salubrious climate spread their attractions before them. They obtained a grant

---

\* Sowams is now Barrington. Aquetneck was named *Isle of Rhodes*, or *Rhode Island*, in 1644, as is supposed from some resemblance to the Island of Rhodes in the Mediterranean Sea. *R. I. Hist. Coll.* Vol. IV. p. 88.

of the island from the chiefs of the Narragansetts, to whom it belonged, and at the end of March, 1638, commenced the settlement at Portsmouth, near its northern extremity. The price paid to the sachems was forty fathoms of white beads. In addition to this, the settlers bought the lands of the native occupants, in some instances paying for them twice over, to satisfy conflicting claims ; so that, with the presents that were given, and the money that was paid, the purchase is said to have been one of the dearest that had then been made of lands in New England.

In negotiating the purchase of Rhode Island, the settlers were mainly dependent upon the exertions of Mr. Williams, who, upon this occasion, displayed the same obliging spirit, which always animated him, when the interests of others were to be promoted, or their rights maintained. His sympathies were strongly enlisted in behalf of the exiled band, who had separated from their brethren in Massachusetts for opinion's sake, and he lent the aid of his powerful influence with the Indian princes, in procuring for them a spot whereon to build a home. It was undoubtedly by his exertions, aided by the honored name of Sir Henry Vane, that the grant of Rhode Island was first obtained ; and it was at his suggestion, that the liberal compensations and

gratuities were paid to the natives, which secured to the colonists a peaceful possession, and rendered their commonwealth so flourishing and happy. He has left an account of his agency in this transaction, in a letter, written in 1658, at a period when, in consequence of the questions which had been raised, he judged it "not unreasonable to declare the rise and bottom of the planting of Rhode Island."

"It was not price, nor money," says he, "that could have purchased Rhode Island. It was obtained by love; by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Henry Vane, and myself, had with that great sachem, Miantonomo, about the league, which I procured between the Massachusetts English and the Narragansetts, in the Pequot war. It is true, I advised a gratuity to be presented to the sachem and to the natives; and because Mr. Coddington and the rest of my loving countrymen were to inhabit the place, and to be at the charge of the gratuities, I drew up a writing in Mr. Coddington's name, and in the names of such of my loving countrymen as came up with him, and put it into as sure a form as I could at that time, for the benefit and assurance of the present and future inhabitants of the island."

Here, upon the most beautiful and fertile island along the coast of New England, beyond



the jurisdiction of a jealous court, amidst the refreshing breezes and the varying scenery of the ocean, did the persecuted heretics of Massachusetts at length dwell in quiet; "an out-cast people from the over-zealous colonies," as they styled themselves, "bearing with the several judgments and consciences of each other." The little colony thrived beneath the favorable influences of its genial situation, and the spiritual freedom guarantied to its inhabitants soon extended itself to the southern shores of the island, and to the other islands of the bay. This secluded settlement was the retreat of Mrs. Hutchinson; where, having a more limited theatre of action, and removed from those who denounced her views; and especially from a civil authority that asserted jurisdiction in matters of opinion, she laid aside her character of theological reformer, and led the quiet life of a private lady; as, perhaps, she might always have done, had not her peculiar opinions, and her early departure from womanly propriety, been magnified to undue importance by the indiscreet censures of the over-zealous ministers and magistrates of Massachusetts.

The eventful life of this celebrated woman was brought to a close so melancholy and tragical, as, at any other period than one of extraordinary bigotry and severity, would have

changed every feeling of anger and resentment into pity and sorrow. On the death of her husband, in 1642, she removed her residence to Long Island, where, in the year following, she was murdered by the Indians, with her whole family, comprising sixteen persons, with the exception of one daughter, who was carried away into an unknown captivity. Her tragical death, and the extinction of her family, served but to confirm her enemies in Massachusetts in their convictions of her wickedness, and the justice of their proceedings against her. They were confidently regarded as a revelation of the judgment of God against her destructive heresies, which, even in the distant wilderness to which she had fled, could not escape the righteous retributions of Heaven.

Such is ever the spirit of intolerance. It narrows and dwarfs the intellect by the fallacies it employs, and the suspicions it engenders. It steels the heart, and crushes its generous sympathies, and converts even the misfortunes and sufferings of its victims into justifications of its own severities.

The events, which we have thus narrated, had an important influence upon the affairs of the settlement at Providence, and the narration of them was necessary in order to illustrate the spirit of the time, and the character of the in-

dividual whose life we are tracing. They present his character and principles in striking contrast with those of the other leading men of that day. They imposed upon him offices of disinterested benevolence, the performance of which must have engrossed his attention and consumed his time, even while the support of his family and the interests of his colony were subjects of pressing solicitude. The arbitrary proceedings, adopted by the government of Massachusetts Bay against Mrs. Hutchinson and her adherents, drove from that colony many of its citizens, and in this manner contributed largely to the growth of the plantations at Providence, where the refugees were sure to be welcomed with a ready and generous hospitality. The offspring of Massachusetts, it thus became the home of the disaffected and the banished, whom she had cast out from her citizens. It could hardly be expected that the persons, whom she had thus driven into exile, would entertain very favorable opinions of the justice of the proceedings against them. A letter written from Providence, and complaining of the acts of the General Court, and the prevailing spirit of the colony, was brought to the notice of the authorities. In consequence of this, it was ordered, that, if any one of the settlers at Providence should be found within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts,

he should be brought before one of the magistrates, and, if he gave his sanction to the letter, he should be sent home, and forbidden to come again into the jurisdiction, upon pain of imprisonment and further censure.\*

Acts like this, however, seem to have produced no change in the spirit or conduct of Williams. He still exerted himself on every occasion to preserve the peace of New England, to maintain the rights of the natives, and to conciliate their good-will towards all the colonies. His spirit and conduct are well exemplified in the course, which he pursued with respect to the murder of an Indian, near Pawtucket, by four Englishmen, who had been servants in Plymouth, and had absconded from their masters. The murderers fled to Providence, where they were, at first, kindly received by Mr. Williams, who was as yet ignorant of their crime. They had scarcely departed, when intelligence was brought him of the murder; and of the excitement and alarm it produced among the Indians. He immediately despatched messengers for the apprehension of the men, and repaired himself to the spot, where the murdered man was found, and received from him, just as he was dying, an account of the affair. The men

---

\* Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 256.

were soon apprehended, and brought to Providence; and, by the advice of Governor Winthrop, they were carried to Plymouth, within whose jurisdiction the crime had been committed. One of them subsequently escaped; but the remaining three were tried and executed, in the presence of Mr. Williams and some Indians of the tribe, to which the murdered man belonged, whom he invited to accompany him to witness the justice which white men awarded to the murderer of an Indian.

Conduct like this, in vindication of the rights of the natives, and in promoting the peace and happiness of all the inhabitants of the country, did not fail to secure the abiding confidence of the Indian chiefs. In every question that arose between them and the English, he was made their adviser, and often became the mediator between the parties. In the year 1640, there were rumors abroad of new mischiefs plotting among the Indians. The Governor of Massachusetts strengthened the defences of the colony, and sent an agent to the Narragansetts, to ascertain the truth of the rumors, and to invite the sachem to Boston, for the purpose of renewing a good understanding with the authorities. The reports were all denied by Miantonomo, who expressed his readiness to come to Boston, provided Mr. Williams could accompany



him as his friend and adviser. But the Court of Massachusetts refused to relax their sentence of banishment against him, even to allow a temporary visit to the colony, on an errand so disinterested and important to its peace and well-being.

The sternness with which Massachusetts adhered to the letter of the sentence, and the act of exclusion which she passed against all the inhabitants of Providence, operated exceedingly to their disadvantage. Boston was then the principal mart of trade in New England, and, by the act of the Court, those who had been forbidden to enter Massachusetts were obliged to forego many of the comforts of life, which could only be obtained there, as well as the profits of the trade they might have carried on with the inhabitants. Roger Williams himself complains, that many thousand pounds would not repay the losses he sustained in being thus debarred from commerce with the English and natives of Massachusetts. In referring to this period of his life, he says his "time was spent day and night, at home and abroad, on the land and water, at the hoe and at the oar, for bread." He was poor, and obliged to labor constantly for his support; and, even with his utmost exertions, in those early times, he and his fellow-settlers at Providence must often have been reduced to privations and suf-

ferings, which their prosperous and wealthy descendants can now but inadequately conceive.

Among the turbulent spirits, whose erratic career was connected with the life of Roger Williams, was Samuel Gorton, a wild and restless enthusiast, who arrived at Boston in 1636. He soon removed to Plymouth, where, falling into a difficulty with the minister and the authorities, he was sentenced to pay a fine, and to give bonds for his subsequent good behavior. From Plymouth, he went to Rhode Island, where it is stated, though upon insufficient grounds, that he was tried as a disturber of the peace, and condemned to be publicly whipped. He at length came to Providence, where Roger Williams, with his usual humanity, received him to his hospitality, and offered him a shelter. Here he soon became the occasion of no small difficulty to the inhabitants, whose simple compact of voluntary association rendered social feuds of easy growth. The town was already distracted by the disputes, which had grown out of the division of the lands, and the ambiguous language in which the title was originally conveyed to Williams.

Gorton, having purchased a tract of land at Pawtuxet, in the south part of the Providence purchase, was soon joined by some of his adherents, who had been disfranchised at Newport.

A quarrel immediately sprang up between them and the inhabitants of Providence, which long disturbed the peace of the colony, and came well nigh ending in violence and bloodshed. The parties became exasperated, and went forth against each other with arms, bent upon settling the controversy by blows. But Mr. Williams, mortified at the existence of so disgraceful a feud, pacified the combatants, and persuaded them to retire without violence. Yet this did not settle the strife. No arbitration could allay the stormy passions which had been excited. The infant colony, at that time without a government, and under no control save that of the popular sentiment, was completely distracted by the controversy. In this state of things, a few individuals of the weaker party sent an appeal to Massachusetts for aid, in settling the peace of the colony. The application was refused; but the act itself prepared the way for a series of attempts, on the part of Massachusetts, to usurp the control of affairs at Providence, until, at length, she asserted absolute jurisdiction over the whole settlement.

To this proceeding of his fellow-planters Mr. Williams seems never to have given the slightest sanction, though the opposite has been frequently affirmed. He was opposed to the principles of Gorton, and was displeased with his

conduct; yet he would not withhold from him the hospitality and shelter he sought. He evidently regarded him as a man of troublesome opinions and wayward impulses, but not on this account to be driven from the colony. Accordingly, Gorton was allowed to purchase land at Providence, though he never signed the compact by which the inhabitants bound themselves to each other; a circumstance which renders his conduct still more ungrateful and reprehensible.

A year or two later, the feud still remaining unabated, four of the residents at Pawtuxet, who were opposed to Gorton, gave in their allegiance to Massachusetts, in order that he might be brought to punishment. The authorities of the Bay, in those days, were seldom very scrupulous about extending their jurisdiction, and immediately began to exercise the prerogatives of government over the citizens of Providence. Gorton and his adherents obeyed the dictates of prudence, and removed beyond the Pawtuxet River, the southern boundary of Providence, to Shawomet, or Warwick, where they purchased lands of the natives, and commenced a settlement. But the authorities of Massachusetts were not thus to be defeated. They set up a plea of jurisdiction even here, and sent an armed force, with orders to seize Gorton, and bring

him to Boston for trial. The trial, which proceeded on a general charge of his being an enemy of religion, and a disturber of the peace, terminated in a severe sentence, by which he and his associates were doomed to imprisonment during the winter, and compelled to hard labor with an iron chain bolted fast upon their limbs.

These unfortunate men, whose only crimes were their wild and fanatical opinions, were separated from each other, and imprisoned in solitude in several of the towns about Boston; they were forbidden, upon penalty of death, to speak to any one save an officer of the church or of the colony; and, at the close of a dreary winter's confinement, barely escaping with their lives, were banished from Massachusetts. Gorton, accompanied by two of his associates, afterwards went to England, where they represented their wrongs to the Earl of Warwick and the Commissioners for the Plantations, and obtained from them a full recognition of their title to the lands at Shawomet, and an order to the authorities of Massachusetts to allow them unmolested possession of their rights.

These events were eminently fitted to suggest lessons and reflections, which did not fail to affect the sagacious mind of Mr. Williams. He had already had abundant opportunities of learn-



ing the arbitrary and inquisitorial spirit of the neighboring colony; but he probably had not before been fully aware of the tendency to tumult and trouble existing among the members of his own settlement, or of the absolute necessity of some more efficient organization than the simple bond of a common faith in the same principles of civil freedom, and the compact of town fellowship, which had hitherto bound them together. In connection also with subsequent proceedings on the part of the other colonies of New England, these events prepared the way for important changes in the affairs of Providence, which opened new spheres for the benevolent enterprises and exertions of its founder.

They also illustrate, as fully as records can do it, the difficulties with which the heterodox colony was so long obliged to contend, and are sufficient to satisfy every candid reader, that Massachusetts Bay had but slender claims upon the gratitude of her offspring for any assistance she rendered, in relieving the necessities or mitigating the trials incident to an infant settlement in the wilderness.

## CHAPTER X.

*The New England Confederacy. — The Colonies in Rhode Island excluded. — They appeal to the King. — Williams is appointed their Agent, and sails for England. — Obtains a Charter. — Publishes the "Bloody Tenet." — He returns to Rhode Island with the Charter. — His Reception at Providence. — His Pacification of the Indians. — Organization of a Government under the Charter. — Spirit of its early Legislation.*

THE year 1643 was rendered memorable by the establishment of the earliest confederacy among the colonies of New England. It was a union of great importance to the interests of those embraced in it, and may be regarded as, in some sort, the germ of the subsequent confederations which have marked the history of the American people. The objects which were proposed in its formation were mutual protection against the depredations of the Indian tribes, who were now every year becoming more formidable by their acquisition of fire-arms, and against the encroachments of the Dutch and the French, whose plantations skirted the settlements of the English, together with

the preservation of the liberty and peace of the gospel, and the advancement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The league, which contained the articles of the union, was signed at Boston, on the 19th of May, by the commissioners of the several colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and New Haven.

By the terms of the confederacy, it was arranged that two commissioners should be annually chosen by each colony, to meet successively at Boston, Hartford, New Haven, and Plymouth, once in a year, or oftener, if the exigencies of the times should require, who should form a kind of central government, with power to determine all questions relating to war and peace, and provide for the general administration of justice, and the common welfare of all the colonies. The independence, however, of each of the several governments was strictly preserved; for the local jurisdiction remained unimpaired, and the commissioners, in reality, could do little more than discuss the matters submitted to them, and recommend, for the adoption of the colonies, the measures they might deem expedient. They had no power to enforce a single decree, or to alter or annul a single proceeding of the colonial assemblies.

The colony at Providence, formed, as it had

been, principally of the outcast and banished from the other settlements of New England, was not invited to join the confederacy; and her subsequent application for admission, like that of the settlers on Rhode Island, was sternly refused. The reason alleged at the time was the want of a regular charter of government, though, from the fact that, when this objection was removed, the refusal was still persisted in, we may well infer that other considerations determined the action of the confederate colonies. The entire separation of religion from the control of the civil power, and the catholic and tolerant spirit, which characterized the inhabitants of Providence, were peculiarly offensive to their neighbors, and undoubtedly constituted the principal cause of the exclusion of the colony from the New England confederacy. The spirit which banished Roger Williams from Massachusetts had lost none of its sternness and severity, and would now regard with no favorable disposition the plantations which embodied his principles, and were growing up beneath his care. The inhabitants of Providence were thus left exposed to all the inconveniences and dangers incident to an isolated position, among barbarians on the one hand, and powerful and united neighbors on the other. In every emergency, they

must rely on their own resources, and trust to their own unaided strength. Had the little state, stung by this ingratitude and humiliation, retaliated the injuries she had received, it would have been no extraordinary act, and would have found, at least, some palliation in the political necessities to which she was reduced. So great was the influence of her founder with the Indians, that their friendship might easily have been withdrawn from the other colonies, and her admission to the confederacy been compelled by the troubles she might thus have occasioned them.

No such spirit, however, was harbored in the minds of Williams and his associates. Their influence, while it was able to protect their colony amidst the perils which threatened its existence, was exerted, in every instance, to appease the vengeance of the savages, and protect the lives and interests of their countrymen; and, had their views been oftener regarded, the early annals of New England might have been free from, at least, some of the blots that now darken their pages.

The increasing prosperity of the colonies at Providence, and on Rhode Island, together with their exclusion from the confederacy, and the frequent declarations made by their enemies, that they had no authority for civil govern-



ment, at length induced them to unite in seeking the favor and protection of the mother country. The mission was intrusted to Mr. Williams. It was one of considerable difficulty, and of vast importance; for upon its successful accomplishment depended even the existence of the colony. He accepted the high trust thus committed to him, and, by reason of his exclusion from the territories of Massachusetts, proceeded to New York, to embark for England. And here, while waiting for the ship to go to sea, an opportunity was presented him to exert his influence with the Indians, and save the colony at Manhattoes from a desolating war. The Indians of Long Island, exasperated by the wanton cruelties of the Dutch, had risen against them in great fury. They had burned the house and murdered the family of Mrs. Hutchinson, and assaulted the dwelling of Lady Moody, an inhabitant of the island, who had lately removed from Massachusetts. It was by the intercession of Williams, and that peculiar influence, which, more than any other man, he possessed with the Indians, that their fury was appeased, and peace restored to the settlements of the Dutchmen.

In the course of the summer of 1643, he set sail from New York for his native land. Of the length or the incidents of the voyage he has

left no written account. He beguiled its wearisome days by preparing a "KEY TO THE INDIAN LANGUAGES," which he drew up, as he says, "as a private help to my own memory, that I might not, by my present absence, lightly lose what I had so dearly bought in some few years' hardship and charges among the barbarians." It was published soon after his arrival in England, and was the first attempt which had then been made to explain, in English, the language and manners of the North American Indians. It contains much valuable information, and is still regarded as one of the best expositions of the subjects to which it relates.

Mr. Williams arrived in England in the midst of the civil war which then distracted the nation, and but a short time after the popular party had seen Hampden, the purest and noblest of their leaders, cut down by the foe on the field of Chalgrove. The fate of the English monarchy was suspended on the crisis. The nation was hurried on through a series of tumultuous events. The Parliament gained the ascendancy; Charles the First was sent to the scaffold, and the ambition of Cromwell found a way for the accomplishment of its vast schemes of aggrandizement. This disturbed state of public affairs was, on the whole, favorable to the objects of Mr. Williams. The Parliament, as yet

distrustful of their position, and uncertain respecting the issues of the revolution they had set on foot, were willing to conciliate the favor of the colonies, and intrusted their affairs to the administration of the Earl of Warwick, as Governor-General and Lord High Admiral of the colonies in America, with a council composed of five peers and twelve commoners. Among the commoners who sat at the council-board of the Earl of Warwick was Sir Henry Vane, the early friend of Roger Williams, and his illustrious compeer in advocating the doctrines of religious freedom. By him Mr. Williams was received with a cordial welcome, and presented to the commissioners of the colonies, who listened to his views with marked attention, and, in the name of the King, granted him a charter for the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport, to be entitled "The Incorporation of Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay in New England." The instrument bore the date of March 14th, 1644, and conveyed to the inhabitants of these towns full power and authority to adopt such a form of civil government, and "to make and ordain such civil laws and constitutions, as they, or the greatest part of them, shall by free consent agree unto." The charter distinctly recognized the principle on which the colony was founded,

and which the inhabitants had carefully cherished, that government should concern civil things alone; and within this sphere it imposed no limitation, save only that the ordinances that might be adopted should not conflict with the laws of England.

During his residence in England, notwithstanding the engrossing nature of his mission, and the civil strifes that were raging around him, Mr. Williams found leisure to write and publish his famous book called "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience." In this, the ablest of his works, in the form of a dialogue between Truth and Peace, he discusses the doctrines of religious freedom, for which he had always contended, and in the maintenance of which he had made so many sacrifices. The work was printed in London, without the author's name, in 1644. It was dedicated to the High Court of Parliament, and from the beauties of its style, and the great interest of the subject, was fitted to command unusual attention, especially at that early dawn of intellectual liberty in England. Mr. Cotton, of Boston, wrote a reply, which, in accordance with the quaint and singular taste of the age, he entitled "The Bloody Tenet washed and made white in the Blood of the Lamb." After some time, Mr. Williams published a rejoinder,

which, in the same style then so common in theological writings, he called "The Bloody Tenet yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to wash it white."

The question at issue between these two eminent disputants has long since been decided on the side of Mr. Williams, by the general voice of the Protestant world; and the writings to which it gave rise now only serve to show how far he strode before even the most gifted spirits of his time in the perception and assertion of the rights of the soul. Though the writings of Cotton and of Williams conduct the reader to widely different conclusions, and are distinguished from each other by marked characteristics, yet the controversy, on both sides, was conducted in a spirit of courtesy and candor unusual in that age of bitter strife and severe personalities.

The errand of Mr. Williams in England was now accomplished, and in the summer of 1644 he embarked for America. Thirteen years had passed since he first set sail, a youthful emigrant to the untried settlements of the new world. How changed was now his condition! He had suffered persecution at the hands of his brethren, and tasted the bitterness of a wintry exile; but he had also become the father of a new colony, which embodied a great prin-



ciple of civil society, now for the first time put in practice; and he was bearing with him across the Atlantic a charter, which guarantied its existence and exercise for ever. He arrived at Boston on the 17th of September, 1644, and landed in the forbidden territory of Massachusetts Bay, by virtue of the following letter which had been given to him in England, signed by several members of both houses of Parliament, and addressed "to the Governor and Assistants, and the rest of our worthy friends in the Plantation of Massachusetts Bay, in New England."

"OUR MUCH HONORED FRIENDS,

"Taking notice, some of us of long time, of Mr. Roger Williams's good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemy and oppressors of God's people, the prelates, as also of his great industry and travels in his printed Indian labors, in your parts, (the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America,) and in which respects it hath pleased both houses of Parliament to grant unto him, and friends with him, a free and absolute charter of civil government for those parts of his abode, and withal sorrowfully resenting, that, amongst good men, (our friends,) driven to the ends of the world, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and

who mutually give good testimony each of the other, (as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you,) there should be such a distance; we thought it fit, upon divers considerations, to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavors of nearer closing, and of ready expressing those good affections (which we perceive you bear to each other) in effectual performance of all friendly offices. The rather because of those bad neighbors you are likely to find too near you in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the west of England, and from Ireland. That however it may please the Most High to shake our foundations, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous Plantations may be some refreshings to your true and faithful friends."

This letter was delivered to the authorities of Massachusetts, but it wholly failed to soften their temper towards Mr. Williams, further than to allow him to proceed unmolested to Providence. The magistrates, says Hubbard, upon the receipt of the letter, examined their hearts, but saw no reason to condemn themselves for their former proceedings against him. The heretical colony, now that it had received a charter from the Council, and its founder had been applauded and honored by some of the leading

members of the government in England, was an object of even greater distrust and suspicion than before. The heresies, which the fathers of Massachusetts had so often attempted to destroy, seemed now secure beneath the protection of a separate government, and, in their estimation, were clothed with greater importance and power of mischief.

But new honors awaited the return of Mr. Williams to his own colony. The news of his arrival at Boston had gone before him, and, as he proceeded on his journey homeward, along the scenes he once traversed as an exile, he found the waters of the Seekonk covered with canoes, containing the whole population of Providence, who had come out to welcome his return and bear him back in triumph. It was a fitting expression of the gratitude and esteem in which the citizens of the colony held the character and services of its founder and greatest benefactor.

The inhabitants of the several settlements, embraced in the charter of Mr. Williams, were not prepared to enter at once upon the organization of a common government, in accordance with its provisions. Many local questions were to be decided, and jarring interests were to be harmonized. Besides this, the distracted state of affairs in England created party divisions among the colonists of America. In this way

the hopes and plans of Mr. Williams were deferred. But his services, as the pacificator of the Indians, were again immediately put in requisition, in settling the difficulties which had sprung up, in his absence, between the colonies and the Narragansetts. Miantonomo, the sachem of the tribe, the early and tried friend of the fathers of Rhode Island, had been put to death in circumstances which gave to the deed the aspect of wanton cruelty and injustice. In violation of an existing treaty, he had made war upon Uncas, the Mohegan chief, and was defeated and taken prisoner in battle. The conqueror carried the Narragansett warrior to Hartford, where he placed him in prison, and submitted his fate to the commissioners of the United Colonies. It was in their power to save him, had such been their inclination; but they asked the advice of "five of the most judicious elders," who, seeing in the unfortunate sachem not only the violator of the treaty, but the friend of Roger Williams and Samuel Gorton, gave their opinion that he deserved to die. The commissioners accepted the decision, and Miantonomo was escorted, by a guard of soldiers, into the territory of the Mohegans, where he was put to death by Uncas, in the presence of some English, who were sent to witness the shameful deed. Had this act been the simple dictate of

barbarian revenge, it would have occasioned no surprise to those who are familiar with the stern customs of savage warfare; but that it should have been sanctioned and advised by Christian ministers, even at this distant day mantles the cheek with a blush of shame, at the weakness of principle and the bitterness of feeling which it betrays.

It was not strange that the tribe burned to avenge the murder of their chief, for whose ransom, they alleged, they had paid the wampum which was stipulated. They soon commenced a war with the Mohegans, which they also threatened to extend to all the colonies of New England, except those at Providence and on Rhode Island, to which they had always been friendly, and from which, in return, they had received nothing but kindness. The commissioners held an extraordinary session in Boston, at which they received a letter from Roger Williams, informing them of the hostile determinations of the Narragansetts. No time was to be lost. It was immediately ordered, that three hundred men be sent to the aid of the Mohegans, the allies of the English. Two messengers were also despatched to the Narragansetts, to appease, if possible, their vengeance and prevent the war.

The sachems of the tribe had already sent for Mr. Williams to advise them; and, on the arrival



of the messengers, he acted as their interpreter, and united his influence with theirs to allay the hostile passions of the natives. By his mediation, Passacus, the brother and successor of Miantonomo, was induced to go to Boston, attended by other chiefs of the tribe, where he concluded a treaty with the commissioners, which crushed forever the power, the independence, and the pride of the Narragansetts. The treaty was concluded on the 4th of August, 1645. By its provisions, the sachems agreed to pay to the commissioners two thousand fathoms of wampum, as a remuneration for the expenses of the war, and left at Boston a child of Passacus, together with the children of some others of the chiefs, as hostages of their fidelity. Thus, again, were the settlements of New England saved from the desolations of Indian war, mainly by the disinterested exertions and great personal influence of Mr. Williams.

The several towns of the Providence Plantations at length agreed on a form of government, framed in accordance with the powers granted to them in the charter. It was adopted in a general assembly of the people of the colony, held at Portsmouth, in May, 1647; and, among its leading provisions, it required the annual election of a President and four assistants, in

whom should be vested the executive power, and who should constitute the Supreme Court of trials for all cases of appeal from the local authorities of the towns. The legislative Assembly was composed of six commissioners, from each of the towns, who should make laws, and order all the general affairs of the colony; but, so jealous were the people of the exercise of any delegated authority, that the towns reserved to themselves the power of annulling any law, which their representatives might pass. The organization of the new government was a consummation of great importance in the history of the little colony; and to bring it about had enlisted the strongest interests and efforts of Mr. Williams. He strenuously sought to remove the petty jealousies, which the settlements had been in the habit of indulging towards each other, and to heal the divisions by which the people, composed as they were of many discordant spirits and tenacious consciences, had long been distracted. It was, undoubtedly, in accordance with his own counsels, and to remove every occasion of complaint on the part of the inhabitants of Rhode Island, that the office of President of the colony, which so naturally belonged to himself, was bestowed upon Mr. John Coggeshall, of Newport, at the first General

Assembly of election, while he accepted the humbler place of assistant for the town of Providence.

Among the acts passed at this first meeting of the colonial Assembly, was a resolution making honorable mention of the services of Mr. Williams in negotiating the charter, and, "in regard to his so great trouble, charges, and good endeavors," granting him the sum of one hundred pounds, to be levied upon the three towns of the province, viz., fifty pounds from Newport, thirty pounds from Portsmouth, and twenty pounds from Providence. Inadequate as this compensation was to remunerate him even for the actual expenses incurred in his important mission, the whole of the sum was never paid. The poverty of the people may be pleaded as some slight extenuation of so gross neglect; but it is to be feared, that, in consequence of the party divisions, which then existed in the colony, as well as of the imperfect authority with which the government was invested, the obligations of public indebtedness were but slightly felt, and reluctantly acknowledged.

At the same general meeting of the colony was adopted a code of laws, fashioned, in the main, after the existing laws of England, but strictly confining its regulations to civil things alone, and expressly declaring, in one of its pro-

visions, that "otherwise than in what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the fear of his God."

Such were the early government and the legislation of Rhode Island. It was the simple embodiment of the principles of her founder, and displays a spirit of freedom, and a practical wisdom, that stand out in bold contrast with the prevailing views of the older colonies, and would do honor to the statesmen and legislators of any age.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

*Private Life of Williams. — Dissensions in Rhode Island. — Coddington's Commission. — Oppressive Policy of the United Colonies. — Treatment of John Clarke and others in Massachusetts. — Dissatisfaction with Coddington. — Williams and Clarke are appointed Agents of the Colony. — They sail for England.*

DURING the years through which we have followed the fortunes of Mr. Williams up to the present point, some important changes had taken place in his private affairs. The character of

minister of the gospel, in which he first appeared in New England, and in which he was banished from Massachusetts, had been gradually laid aside. It is probable, that he had not wholly ceased from preaching; but, some alteration having taken place in his views of the Christian ministry, and the affairs of the colony having almost constantly occupied his attention, he seems never to have held, for any length of time after his removal to Providence, the office of teacher of a church. His family, too, had been gradually increased by the births of six children, all of whom were now of a tender age. In order to provide for the support of his family, as well as to repair the fortunes, which persecution and sacrifice had impoverished, soon after his return from England he erected a trading-house, in the country of the Narragansetts, at which he now spent the greater part of his time. Here, for many years, he carried on an honorable traffic with the Indians, and, at the same time, instructed them in the truths of Christianity, and acted as their adviser in all their diplomacy with the settlements around them.

He was still, however, regarded as a citizen of Providence, and, as such, was successively elected to many of the highest offices of the town and the colony, and found frequent oc-



casions on which to put forth his exertions for their welfare. The petty strifes and local feuds, which had so long delayed the organization of government under the charter, were not wholly brought to an end by that event. The causes which gave rise to them are long since forgotten, and were, probably, in themselves exceedingly trivial and unimportant. The several towns of the province, settled as they had been mainly by refugees from the other colonies, comprised persons of every form of religious faith, and every shade of political opinion. They early became the asylum of all sorts of consciences, so that, as was reproachfully said, if a person had lost his conscience, he might be sure to find it in some of the towns of Rhode Island. Among a population so promiscuously collected, it is not strange that some should have mistaken the true idea of religious freedom, and extended the shield of conscience over matters and opinions with which it had no proper connection. The harmony of Providence was early disturbed, in this way, by the quarrels of troublesome and heady persons, who grew restive beneath the wholesome restraints that were imposed upon them. From all such strifes, however, Mr. Williams appears to have studiously kept aloof; for his name is seldom mentioned in connection with them, save when he

steps forward to calm the agitated waters, and enjoin harmony upon the excited and turbulent citizens. His efforts were often crowned with success, though he frequently had the mortification of seeing the principles of religious freedom, which, in his own mind, were clearly separated from all licentiousness, ridiculously perverted to justify the silliest absurdities of opinion, or the most irregular extravagances of conduct.

One of the principal difficulties, which, at this time, disturbed the peace of the colony, arose from the extraordinary proceedings of Mr. Coddington, the leading inhabitant of the Island of Rhode Island. From the very organization of the government under the charter, he arrayed himself in the opposition, and seems to have left no effort untried to overturn and destroy it. Uniting with himself a faction composed probably of persons accustomed to take their opinions from him, he first petitioned the colony of Plymouth to take the island under its jurisdiction; and when this application failed, notwithstanding he had been elected President, in the mean time he went to England, to endeavor to set aside the charter which Mr. Williams had procured, and destroy the union of the towns, which had been organized by its provisions. In this endeavor he was successful; though by what

representations he induced the Council of State, who then governed the country, so soon to annul the former instrument, has never been clearly understood. He returned in 1651, bringing with him a commission, erecting the islands of Rhode Island and Canonicut into a separate government, and also appointing him Governor, for life, of the new colony, with a Council to be nominated by the people and approved by himself.

The arrival of a *charter*, whose operation would inevitably destroy the existing government, and clothe a single individual with unwonted power, created no ordinary sensation among the towns of the province. In Newport and Portsmouth, especially, the excitement ran so high as almost to lead to violence, and the opposition, which Mr. Coddington encountered in the exercise of his new authority, was abundantly sufficient to show, that the whole proceeding was without the sanction, and contrary to the wishes, of a majority of the people. The effect of the measure, however, was, for a time, to sever the islands from the other towns of the colony, and to place them under the jurisdiction of a separate government.

But these internal dissensions were not the only troubles to which the Plantations at Providence were subjected. The several portions of the territory were still subjects of the pressing

claims of the other colonies; and that the little republic escaped the partitioning, which has so often been the destiny of feeble states, among powerful and ambitious neighbors, is to be attributed to the firmness and perseverance of her citizens, rather than to the forbearance or negligence of the colonies that surrounded her. Plymouth had at different times laid claim to the Island of Rhode Island. Massachusetts still asserted her jurisdiction over the people at Pawtuxet; and, soon after the return of Mr. Williams from England, she had sent him an order, while acting as President of the colony, forbidding him to exercise any of the functions of government, and alleging that the whole territory was hers, by virtue of a charter, which had been granted by the Parliament. Though these claims of Massachusetts were never allowed within the territory either of Providence or of Rhode Island, yet she did not fail to exercise her power, sometimes in a most despotic way, over the citizens of these colonies, whenever they were found within her own proper jurisdiction. Among the acts of her authorities towards these unoffending assertors of the freedom of conscience, the following are of so tyrannical a nature, as to remind the reader of the dark deeds recorded of the inquisition, in countries on which the light of the reformation has never shone



The Reverend John Clarke, Mr. Obadiah Holmes, and Mr. John Crandall, three citizens of Newport, were appointed, by the church at that place, to visit one William Witter, a member of that church, then resident at Lynn, who, on account of his great age, had requested a visit from his brethren, for the purpose of Christian intercourse and improvement. They proceeded in a peaceable manner, like Christian men, on this benevolent mission, and arrived at the house of Mr. Witter on Saturday. The next day being the Sabbath, Mr. Clarke was invited to preach at the house to the members of the family, and such of the neighbors as might chance to come in. While he was speaking from some text of the Bible relating to temptation, he was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of two constables, who silenced his preaching, and arrested him and his companions, by virtue of the following order, signed by one of the magistrates, viz.

*“By virtue hereof, you are required to go to the house of William Witter, and so to search from house to house for certain erroneous persons, being strangers, and them to apprehend, and in safe custody to keep, and to-morrow morning, at eight o’clock, to bring before me.”*

They were detained, through the Sabbath, in



the custody of the officers, and on the following day were sent to Boston by the magistrate, and committed to prison. On being brought before the Court for trial, they were defended by Mr. Clarke, in a speech which not a little puzzled the Massachusetts magistrates, with the dilemmas which it proposed. "At length, however," says Mr. Clarke, "the Governor stepped up, and told us we had denied infant baptism, and, being somewhat transported, told me I had deserved death, and said he would not have such trash brought into their jurisdiction."

The trial resulted, as was to be expected, in the conviction of the prisoners, and they were sentenced by the Court to pay a fine, Mr. Clarke of twenty pounds, Mr. Holmes of thirty pounds, and Mr. Crandall of five pounds, or, in case of their refusal of payment, to be whipped. The fines they of course refused to pay, as they acknowledged neither the justice of the sentence nor the jurisdiction of the Court. They were accordingly remanded to prison, from which, after a few weeks, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Crandall, by the interposition of their friends, were set at liberty, and suffered to return to Newport. Mr. Holmes was detained longer, and at length, before being discharged, was whipped with thirty lashes upon his back, inflicted with unusual severity.

Proceedings like these, of which the early annals of Massachusetts furnish a melancholy list of examples, can be fully explained only by reminding the reader, that the victims of this inquisitorial power were regarded as heretics, and that, in the estimation of the Puritans of that colony, heresy was a crime before which every civil offence faded into comparative insignificance.\* Mr. Clarke and his companions were Baptists, the disciples of a sect, which the fathers of Massachusetts had seen rapidly increasing among the people of the colony, in spite of the severe laws which they had promulgated against its tenets and its worship. These people had always been fostered in Rhode Island; and now, that any of their ministers had ventured to set up their persecuted worship on the soil of the Puritan commonwealth, though within the sanctuary of a private dwelling, and even without proclaiming any of their peculiar tenets, they were punished with the utmost rigors of the law. Two other persons also, who were present at the punishment of Mr. Holmes, and who expressed some sympathy with his sufferings, and admiration of the spirit with which he endured them, were immediately arrested by the

---

\* For an account of these transactions, see Backus's *History of New England*, Vol. I. p. 207.

officers, and, when brought before the Court, were sentenced to a fine and imprisonment.

It would have been difficult for the authorities of Massachusetts to point out the particular law, which had been violated in either of these instances, in any of its literal provisions. It was enough for them, that the spirit of the whole legislation of the colony was opposed to heresy, and that the ministers sanctioned and commended all their measures for its suppression. Such was the zeal of the people, at that time, for defending the Puritan faith, that, when heretics were to be punished, the Court did not scruple to disregard all limits to their authority, and to overleap the bounds of their jurisdiction.

In this condition of the affairs of the colony, while the citizens were at variance with each other, and were subjected, without redress, to every species of tyranny and indignity, which their neighbors of Massachusetts chose to practise upon them, it was obvious to all that their only safety was to be found in maintaining the union of the towns, which had been formed under the charter of Mr. Williams. Amidst the conflicting claims, which the other colonies had interposed, it was clear that neither of the sections into which the province had been divided could long maintain an independent existence. The Indians also, taking advantage of the dis-

sensions of the colonists, began to commit depredations, which the commissioners of the United Colonies were unwilling to prevent, and which the several towns were too feeble to punish.

The inhabitants of the islands in the bay, who had formerly opposed the measures of Mr. Coddington, now dreaded the prospect of being subjected to his power. His sympathies seem to have strongly inclined to the regal side of the great question, which then agitated the British empire, while those of the great body of the people had always been with the Parliament. And it is highly probable, that they entertained serious apprehensions that the administration of the new Governor, who owed his elevation not to the suffrages of the colony, but to the power of the Council in England, might prove unfavorable to popular rights and privileges. Their only hope, therefore, plainly lay in an appeal to the Council of State for the abrogation of Mr. Coddington's commission, and the restoration of the charter, which had been granted to Mr. Williams. With a full impression of these views, and very soon after the events which we have narrated above had occurred, nearly all the inhabitants of Newport, and a large number of those of Portsmouth, united in an attempt to accomplish this most desirable object, on which the very existence of their settlements seemed



to depend. They appointed Mr. John Clarke to proceed as their agent to England, and represent their condition to the Council, which then governed the country. The appointment was in every way a most fortunate one. He was a man of liberal education, and bland and courtly manners, and was fully acquainted with the affairs of the people he was appointed to represent, having resided among them for many years as a physician, and as a minister of the church at Newport.

At about the same time, and influenced doubtless by nearly the same considerations, the two towns of Providence and Warwick, which had still continued to maintain the government under the original charter, made proposals to Mr. Williams again to cross the Atlantic, and coöperate with Mr. Clarke, for the purpose of procuring the interposition of the Council in adjusting the difficulties, which had sprung up in the colony. These proposals he at first absolutely declined, though not from any diminution of his interest in the colony, but from reluctance again to leave his family, and his inability to incur the expense of so great an undertaking. It may be, too, that he was influenced by his former experience of the thankless nature of services rendered to the state, and called to mind the meagre and reluctant remuneration he had re-



ceived for his labors and expenditures in procuring the charter.

Such, however, were the importunities of the citizens, and such his own patriotic interest in the colony, over whose growth he had watched with parental care, that he at length accepted the appointment which was conferred upon him, and prepared again to embark for the shores of England. Some effort was made, among the inhabitants of the towns, to raise the funds necessary for defraying the expenses of the voyage. The measures which were devised, however, do not appear to have been effectual, for the adequate sum was not provided, and he was obliged to sell his trading-house in Narragansett, in order to obtain the means of making the voyage, and of supporting his family during his absence. In this act, which seems to have been the offspring of pure necessity, he not only relinquished the profits of the lucrative traffic he had been carrying on, amounting, as he says, to a hundred pounds per annum, but he also parted with what must have been his chief dependence for the livelihood of himself and his family. It is only when we thus consider the circumstances in which he was placed, that he was a husband and a father, surrounded by a large family, whose immediate wants he must supply, and for whose education and future well-

being he must make provision, that we can fully appreciate the disinterested spirit that impelled him to the sacrifices he made, and the labors he performed. It led him to disregard the limits of a narrow prudence, and to turn a deaf ear to the suggestions of mere personal interest, whenever an opportunity was presented of benefiting the colony he had founded, or of advancing the great principle for which he had contended and suffered.

At length, having completed the requisite preparations for his long absence from home, he joined Mr. Clarke at Boston, where they embarked together in November, 1651. It was not without considerable molestation and embarrassment from the authorities and people of Massachusetts, that Mr. Williams was allowed to pass through their territory for the purpose of taking ship for England. He alludes to these in his subsequent letters, though he furnishes us no means of judging of their nature or operation. Though no longer in any degree able either to harm the orthodoxy or disturb the peace of the colony, yet the authorities were opposed to the objects of his mission, and, it may be, dreaded the representations, which the envoys from Rhode Island had it in their power to make to the government of the mother country of the condition of New England. Tacit-

tus, the great historian of the worst ages of the Roman republic, has remarked it as a principle of human nature, that we hate those whom we have injured; and the treatment which Roger Williams, while living, and which his memory, after he was dead, received from the colony that banished him, would seem to furnish some corroboration of the justness of the remark.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

*State of public Affairs in England.—Williams's Occupations while there.—Coddington's Commission revoked.—Letter of the General Assembly to Williams.—His Intercourse with Sir Henry Vane, Cromwell, and Milton.—His literary Labors.—His Return to Providence.—Reorganization of the Government.—He is elected President of the Colony.*

WE now find Mr. Williams a second time in England, in the service of the colony at Providence. The mother country was still in the midst of the momentous revolution, which had already commenced when he last visited her shores. The interval had been marked by

great events. The King, Charles the First, had been brought to the scaffold; the monarchy, the peerage, and the connection of the church with the government, had been abolished by law; and the Long Parliament, through its Council of State, ruled the realm of England. During the period of his residence there, another change, perhaps still more extraordinary, was added to those with which the age was crowded. Cromwell, impelled, it may be, by considerations of state necessity, as well as by motives of personal ambition, forcibly dissolved the Parliament, and from the ruins of the monarchy erected for himself a throne of even more than kingly power. The public mind was agitated to an unwonted degree by these astonishing changes; new theories of government were broached, and, as never fails to happen in these transition states of the social system, tumults and factions distracted the nation.

Of the events that marked the period, Roger Williams was no indifferent spectator; and we have reason to regret, that no other memorials have been preserved of his residence in England, than such as may be gleaned from the incidental allusions contained in the letters he wrote to his friends in America. These, though few in number, are yet sufficient to show that he was intimately acquainted with many of the

leading personages of the time, and must have been cognizant of much of its secret history, and the hidden springs of its stirring events. Soon after their arrival in England, Mr. Williams and Mr. Clarke presented a petition to the Council of State, in behalf of the colony they had come to represent. This was referred to a committee on foreign affairs for investigation and final decision. The envoys of Rhode Island encountered a strong opposition, in the prosecution of their objects, from some of the members of Parliament, from many of the ministers of both the Presbyterian and Independent churches, and other influential persons, most of whom were in the interest of the other colonies of New England. But they found an efficient and unwavering coadjutor in Sir Henry Vane, whose spirit and principles were kindred with those of Roger Williams, and who had early befriended the colony which he had founded as an asylum for the persecuted assertors of religious freedom. He was at this time at the height of his influence as a statesman, and in the full splendor of his prosperity. He was a prominent member of the Council, of which he had been chosen President, and held the high office of Treasurer and Commissioner of the Navy, in the exercise of which he administered nearly the whole foreign affairs of the common-



wealth. And, more than all, in an age of fanaticism and revolution, when the wildest opinions were asserted, and the most reckless conduct justified, he was ever the fearless, unwavering advocate of regulated liberty, and the consistent, though earnest and enthusiastic exemplar of simple-hearted piety.

In the mean time, however, while the question was still pending, an order was passed by the Council of State vacating Mr. Coddington's commission, and confirming the charter which had formerly been granted to the colony, until a final adjudication of the case could be had. This measure, so favorable, and so full of promise to the interests he was seeking to promote, Mr. Williams, in his letter to the towns of Providence and Warwick, ascribes to the mediation of Sir Henry Vane with the Council, and speaks of him as, "under God, the sheet anchor of our ship." The order of the Council was brought to Newport in the early part of the year 1653, and contained directions to the several Plantations immediately to unite themselves again under the common government of the charter, as they had been before any obstruction to its authority had arisen. Such, however, were now the jealousies which had sprung up anew during the separation of the colony, that the order was not obeyed; and, though Mr. Coddington's rule

seems to have been brought to an end, yet the settlements on the island, and those on the main land, continued for a year and a half to maintain their separate governments.

Mr. Williams, with his associate, still remained in England, to watch the progress of events, and sustain the petition they had presented to the Council. The final adjustment of the claims of the colony was delayed in part by the war between England and Holland, which then engrossed the attention of the government, and also by the determined opposition which these claims encountered from the agents and influential friends of the other New England colonies. The two parties stood in the Parliament, and before the Council, according to the representation of Williams, "as two armies, ready to engage, observing the motions and postures each of the other, and yet shy of each other." During the absence of Mr. Williams, at a meeting of the General Assembly, held at Providence, a letter was addressed to him, expressing the thanks of the Assembly for his "care and diligence" in promoting the interests of the colony, and presenting their opinion, that, in case the charter should be finally renewed, "it might tend much to the weighing of men's minds, and subjecting of persons who have been refractory to yield themselves over as unto a set-

bled government, if it might be the pleasure of the honorable STATE to invest, appoint, and empower himself to come over as Governor of the colony, for the space of one year." An intimation like this, coming from men who had always been distinguished for their jealousy of every form of delegated power, was indeed remarkable, and conveys a strong expression of their confidence in his integrity; and their high appreciation of his services. His own wisdom, also, and the disinterested principles on which he acted, are not less strikingly illustrated in the fact, that he entirely disregarded so flattering a temptation to the acquisition of political power. The letters which he wrote to his townsmen while absent contain no aspirations for self-aggrandizement. The only solicitudes they express are for the welfare of his family, and the harmony and prosperity of the colony; and his most frequent admonitions were, "that no private respects, or gains, or quarrels, may cause them to neglect the public and common safety, peace, and liberties."

The character of Mr. Williams, and his position while in England, would naturally throw him into the society of some of the most distinguished men of the time. He spent a number of weeks at Belleau, the beautiful estate of Sir Henry Vane, in Lincolnshire, where he doubt-

less often mingled in that company of kindred minds, who used so frequently to assemble to discuss, with their illustrious leader, the deep questions of theology, or to devise plans for the happiness and security of the periled and distracted commonwealth. He was in habits of intimate association with Cromwell, who discussed with him the affairs of the state, and drew forth from him his views of the Indians, and his singular adventures among them, in the wilds of New England; with Harrison, the Major-General of the army; with Lawrence, the Lord President of the Council of State; and with many others in Parliament, and at the helm of public affairs. He also formed an intimate acquaintance with Milton, who was then Latin Secretary to the Council, and already rapidly rising to the zenith of his renown as a statesman and a poet. The *Paradise Lost* had not yet been written; but the republican bard had sung many of his sweetest sonnets, and had published in prose some of those noble vindications of liberty, "of which all Europe rang from side to side." Younger than Williams by more than nine years, he was now in the freshness of early manhood, and the full vigor of his great powers. The infirmities and disasters of his later life had not yet darkened the hopes or damped the ardor of his spirit. In their fre-



quent companionship, with the interchange of congenial views, and the expression of common principles and aims, they appear to have mingled the study of languages and literature; and for the Dutch, which the poet acquired from the teachings of Williams, he opened, in return, the rich stores of his varied learning in many different tongues. In these high associations, and in the familiar conversations to which they naturally gave rise, he would, doubtless, often recur to his favorite themes, the inalienable freedom of the conscience, and the separation of religion from the civil power; and the free declaration of his opinions, and the simple narrative of his sufferings, must have exerted an important influence upon the eminent men in whose society he mingled, an influence, indeed, which history cannot now very distinctly trace, but which may have produced its results in the liberal policy of the Protector, and the lessons of toleration, which he enjoined upon the colonies in New England.

In dwelling upon these scenes and incidents of Mr. Williams's residence in England, one cannot fail to be reminded of the contrasts they present to the humble life he had so recently left. Yet, in this society of scholars and statesmen, with whose brilliant fortunes he might easily have identified his own, he did not forget the



colony with whose interests he was charged. His spirit was not elated, nor was his attention ever diverted from the objects he had left his home to accomplish. In order to obtain a livelihood while engaged in their prosecution, he devoted a portion of his time to the instruction of some young gentlemen in the languages, probably the sons of his friends, who, from a respect for his character, and a desire to aid his fortunes, furnished him with this occupation for his leisure hours. And it deserves to be mentioned, as a proof of his extensive scholarship, that he thus taught the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and Dutch, some of them at least, "not by grammar rules," but, as he says himself, by *words, phrases, and constant talk, as we teach our children English*. He was also engaged in some philanthropic labors undertaken for the benefit of the poor in London, who had been reduced to the extremity of suffering by the civil wars, which then disturbed the nation.

The labors in the mining districts had been stopped amidst the tumults of the times, and the price of coals and every species of fuel had become so high, in the metropolis, as to place it utterly beyond the reach of the poorer classes of the people, who gave vent to their desperation in every kind of pillage and conflagration. The sympathies of Mr. Williams were excited

by their miserable condition, and he appears to have enlisted his personal services in the execution of the plans, which were devised for alleviating their sufferings and quieting their discontents. It was also during the same period, the winter of 1652, and while thus engaged in the service of the city and the Parliament, that he found leisure to prepare for the press, and to publish, his rejoinder to Mr. Cotton's answer to his "Bloody Tenet of Persecution," which he entitled "The Bloody Tenet yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to wash it white." At about the same time, he also published his "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's; or, a Discourse touching the propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ," and his "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives," two essays, mainly of a controversial character, relating to the questions of theology and church government, at that time so much discussed both in England and the colonies.

Early in the summer of 1654, Mr. Williams returned to Providence. The final determination of the question pertaining to the renewal of the charter had not yet been accomplished; but the accounts which he received of disagreements and troubles in the colony, together with the unprotected condition of his family, and the great expensiveness of a residence in

England, induced him to leave the remainder of the business in the hands of Mr. Clarke, and return to his turbulent and excited fellow-citizens, that, if possible, he might harmonize their differences, and establish the government he had labored so assiduously in instituting. He bore with him an order from the Lord Protector's Council, addressed to the authorities of Massachusetts, and requiring them to allow him, in future, either to land or to embark within their jurisdiction, without being molested. The order was obeyed, on his landing at Boston, by the Governor, Mr. Bellingham, under his own hand; but it was not till two years after, and then at his own repeated solicitation, that it was formally acknowledged by the General Court, and entered upon the records of the colony.

On his arrival at Providence, and his return to the bosom of his family, the first object which engaged his attention was the restoration of union among the several towns of the colony, and the reorganization of the government, in accordance with the order of the Council of State, passed two years before. To accomplish this, he soon perceived, was an undertaking of no common difficulty. Jealousies and feuds, grown inveterate by the lapse of time, still separated the towns from each other, and distracted the citizens among themselves. So predominant had

this narrow and selfish spirit become, among the people of Providence, that they seemed willing to forego, for the sake of its petty-gratification, the whole advantage of colonial union, and even to call in question the disinterestedness and the value of the services, which Mr. Williams and his associate had rendered by their agency in England. Returning thus to a people, many of whom were too ignorant or too prejudiced to appreciate the blessings they enjoyed, it was not strange that he felt wounded at their ungrateful requital of his sacrifices, and seemed to himself to have been laboring in vain while engaged in their service.

Impressed with these considerations, very soon after his return, he addressed a calm and conciliatory letter to the citizens of Providence, in which he recounts with modesty, yet with great dignity and firmness, the sacrifices he had made in their behalf, for which he had "reaped nothing but grief, and sorrow, and bitterness." He laments, in earnest and pathetic language, the distractions of the colony, points out the perversities of temper in which they had their origin, and urges the citizens to bury their animosities, and unite themselves again in establishing the only government under which they could hope to maintain an independent existence. He also



presented to the town a letter from Sir Henry Vane, addressed to the inhabitants of the colony of Rhode Island, which he had brought with him from England. In this letter, the generous-minded writer mildly reproaches the colonists with their "headiness, tumults, disorders, and injustice, of which," says he, "the noise echoes into the ears of all, as well friends as enemies, by every return of ships from those parts," and strongly urges upon them the appointment of commissioners, in behalf of the several interests, that they thus "might put a stop to their growing breaches and distractions, silence their enemies, encourage their friends, and honor the name of God."

Persuasives like these, coming from the best friends of the colony, did not fail to produce a salutary effect upon the minds of the people of Providence. A meeting of the town was soon after held, at which commissioners were appointed to meet with those, who should be appointed from the other towns, for the purpose of reorganizing the government of the province. This conciliatory example was immediately followed by the three remaining towns, in which were appointed commissioners for the reunion of the colony. At length, on the 31st of August, 1654, a meeting of the commissioners of all the



towns was held, and the articles of union finally agreed upon. All laws, which had been enacted before the separation of the colony, were to remain in force until repealed by the legislature, and all local ordinances, which had been adopted by either portion of the colony, during the period of the separation, were still to be binding upon those who adopted them, so long as they should desire it.

Mr. Williams was also appointed, by the citizens of Providence, to prepare an answer, in behalf of the town, to the letter which Sir Henry Vane had addressed to the people of the colony. This service he readily undertook, and the admirable letter which he wrote has been preserved in the records of the town, bearing the date of August 27th, 1654. It breathes the spirit of elevated and generous patriotism, and was fitted not only to gratify and honor the person to whom it was addressed, but also to subdue the mutual resentments, and unite the discordant opinions, of those in whose name it was sent. Commencing with an expression of regret, on account of the recent retirement of Sir Henry from the councils of the commonwealth, he speaks of his "loving lines" to the colony, as "the sweet fruits of his rest;" "as when the sun retires his brightness from

the world, yet from under the clouds we perceive his presence, and enjoy his light, and heat, and sweet refreshing." He then proceeds to narrate the history of the troubles which had distracted the colony, points out the causes from which they sprang, and sets forth, in glowing terms, the blessings which the colonists have enjoyed, inasmuch as "they have drunk of the cup of as great liberties as any people under the whole heaven." The letter concludes with the earnest assurance, that the heart of their friend shall no more be saddened by their divisions and disorders, and, in the name of the whole colony, utters the hope "that, when we are gone and rotten, our posterity and children after us shall read, in our town records, your pious and favorable letters, and loving kindness to us, and this our answer, and real endeavor after peace and righteousness."

The first general election after the reorganization of the government was held at Warwick, on the 12th of September, at which Mr. Williams was chosen President of the colony. At the same meeting of the citizens of the several towns, he was also appointed, in behalf of the whole colony, in connection with Mr. Gregory Dexter, to draw up and send "letters of humble thanksgiving" to his Highness the Lord Pro-

tector, Sir Henry Vane, Mr. Holland, and Mr. John Clarke, all which he was requested to sign and seal in virtue of his office as President.

Thus was terminated the unhappy division of the settlements of Rhode Island; a division, which had extended through several years, and had nearly destroyed the independent existence of the colony. The auspicious union of the long-separated towns was evidently brought about mainly through the judicious and well-directed efforts of Mr. Williams. He had identified himself with the interests of the people among whom his lot was cast, and in their service he allowed no difficulties to daunt him, no ingratitude or folly to dishearten him. He succeeded in his exertions when most men would have been borne down by the opposition he met, or would have turned away in disgust with the narrow views and perverse tempers of those by whom he was surrounded.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Character of his Administration.—He acts as Mediator between the United Colonies and the Indians.—Spirit of Disorder in the Colony.—Williams's Letter to the Town of Providence.—Conduct of William Harris.—Williams attempts to conciliate the other Colonies.—Their Efforts to compel Rhode Island to persecute the Quakers.—Her liberal Policy towards them.*

THE administration of Mr. Williams, as President of the colony, lasted for two years and a half, and was marked by many important incidents, though the scanty records of the times now afford but imperfect means for their illustration. The office which he held was at that time encompassed with more than ordinary difficulty and perplexity. The people of the several towns had, indeed, united themselves under a common jurisdiction; yet the public sentiment of the colony was still in an unsettled state, and its civil affairs were in such a condition as to render them most difficult of management. The government, which had been adopted under the provisions of the charter, had, from the beginning, been wanting in efficiency, and had proved

itself, in many respects, inadequate to the exigencies even of an infant society. The towns were severally too independent of each other, were bound together by too feeble ties, and possessed too many checks upon the colonial Assembly, readily to make those sacrifices of local interest, which the general good always demands. The colony had just emerged from a protracted strife, in which it had been almost annihilated, and there were then no established usages to control the habits of the people, to mark the limits of authority, or regulate the manner in which it should be exercised. The citizens, too, were singularly and often ridiculously jealous of every demonstration of official power, and were too much disposed to set up their own personal wills against the action of the constituted authorities. A mistaken idea of freedom of conscience had taken possession of many of their minds, and was adding its aid to native obstinacy and the spirit of faction, in producing results, both of opinion and conduct, disastrous to the peace and harmony of the colony.

The manner in which Mr. Williams administered the office of President, in this troubled state of public affairs, well illustrates his character, and furnishes a practical commentary upon his views of civil government, which have been so often misunderstood and misrepresented. He



was both conciliatory and firm; inclined to humor the prejudices of the people, so far as they were harmless, but never to sacrifice to their clamors any real interest of the community, or to shrink from the performance of any official duty, however much opposed to their will. His acts as a magistrate were commended to the colonists by the influence of his personal character, and the services he had rendered the state, so that his authority was seldom resisted or called in question, even amidst "the headiness and tumults" by which he was surrounded.

Soon after entering upon the duties of his presidency, an opportunity was presented for him again to interpose his kind offices in behalf of the Indians, whose interests and relations to the New England colonies never failed to occupy a considerable share of his attention. There was a prospect of hostilities again springing up between the United Colonies and some of the neighboring tribes, and he aimed to put a stop to the rising feud, and scatter the gathering clouds of war. For this purpose, he addressed a letter to the General Assembly of Massachusetts, in which he "humbly prays their consideration, whether it be not only possible, but very easy, to live and die in peace with all the natives of this country." He urges upon them a pacific policy, as the only one becoming a

Christian state, by appealing to their gratitude to the Indians, who had received them, and given them land, when their own countrymen had driven them away; to their regard for the honor of God, whose power had been displayed in the conversion of so many Indians to the Christian faith; to their horror of the sore calamities of war, and their veneration for the bright examples of peace, presented in the sacred Scriptures. Massachusetts, with a spirit that does honor to her early fathers, declared herself against the war, although it had been already determined on by the commissioners of the United Colonies, and the troops who had marched against the Indians returned to their homes, after a bloodless though by no means dishonorable campaign.\*

During the early part of the presidency of Mr. Williams, one of the restless spirits, of whom so many were at this time congregated in Rhode Island, busied himself in circulating, among the citizens of Providence, a seditious tract against the authority of civil government, and maintaining that it was "contrary to the rule of the gospel to execute judgment upon transgressors against the private or public weal." This doctrine, springing up so naturally beneath the unrestricted freedom of opinion, which was then

---

\* Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 187.

enjoyed, was obviously, in its tendency, destructive of the very ends of society ; yet, in the unsettled state of the colony, it was sure to find advocates and followers, some of whom, perhaps, might think it sanctioned by the principles of Roger Williams himself. Indeed, he was evidently inclined to the maxim, "the world is governed too much ;" and his views of civil liberty would undoubtedly lead him to allow to every citizen the utmost degree of personal freedom, consistent with the order and well-being of society.

But of this freedom he perfectly understood the nature, and clearly distinguished the boundary line, which separates it from every form of licentiousness. Accordingly, when a doctrine so fatal to its true interests was avowed in the colony, he immediately set the whole weight of his influence and his authority to oppose it. Though holding the highest office to which the suffrages of the people could raise him, he did not wait to study the popular will, but boldly declared his abhorrence of "such infinite liberty of conscience," as was thus attempted to be set up. He addressed a letter to the town, setting forth the principles on which the state was founded, and denying, in the most explicit manner, that he had ever given the slightest sanction to these doctrines of lawless license. The letter itself is

a sufficient vindication of his fame from every suspicion of radicalism, and is, at the same time, an exposition of the doctrine of freedom of conscience, so full and so explicit as to leave nothing further to be desired for its illustration. The following is the letter as it is quoted by Mr. Knowles from the records of Providence.

“That I should ever speak or write a tittle, that tends to such infinite liberty of conscience, is a mistake, which I have ever disclaimed and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I at present shall only propose this case; There goes many a ship to sea, with many hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and woe is common, and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or a human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes, that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks, may be embarked in one ship; upon which supposal, I affirm that all the liberty of conscience, that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges; that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews, or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship, or compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practise any. I further add, that I never denied, that, notwithstanding this liberty, the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course, yea, and also command that justice, peace, and sobriety be kept, and practised, both



among the seamen and all the passengers. If any of the seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers to pay their freight; if any refuse to help, in person or purse, towards the common charges or defence; if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace or preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders and officers; if any shall preach or write that there ought to be no commanders or officers, because all are equal in Christ, therefore no masters or officers, no laws nor orders, no corrections nor punishments; I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and punish such transgressors, according to their deserts and merits. This, if seriously and honestly minded, may, if it so please the Father of Lights, let in some light to such as willingly shut not their eyes."

This letter of Mr. Williams, full and explicit as it is respecting the authority of government and the duty of citizens, did not entirely eradicate the impracticable and absurd notions of individual freedom, which were propagated by the turbulent spirits, that infested the colony. It is plain, that the principles of religious liberty were very imperfectly understood among the people at large, and that its name was con-



stantly liable to be used, among those who were impatient of restraint, as a pretext for their obstinate adherence to the absurd doctrines they had embraced.

The most troublesome manifestation of this spirit was found in the proceedings of William Harris, an influential inhabitant of Providence, who attempted to inflame the minds of the people a second time towards the constituted authorities, by sending to all the towns of the colony a violent and exciting pamphlet, which is described, in the language of Roger Williams, as being "against all earthly powers, Parliaments, laws, charters, magistrates, prisons, punishments, rates, yea, and against all Kings and Princes."\* He subsequently declared, at a general meeting of the colony, that he was ready to maintain these doctrines with his blood. What action was taken by the magistrates of the colony, in relation to this extraordinary movement on the part of a leading citizen, cannot now be very clearly determined. It is plain, however, that Mr. Williams regarded it as partaking of the nature of treason against the authorities of England, as well as against those of the colony.

A letter, which he received from Crom-

---

\* George Fox digged out of his Burrowes. Boston 1676. p. 20.

well soon after this affair, addressed to the "President, Assistants and Inhabitants of Rhode Island," directing them to take care of the peace and safety of the plantations, that there arise no detriment or dishonor to their commonwealth or themselves, served greatly to strengthen his authority, and to increase the respect of the people for the government. The General Assembly, in pursuance of the advice contained in the Protector's letter, immediately passed an act, declaring, that, "if any person or persons be found, by the examination and judgment of the General Court of Commissioners, to be a ringleader or ringleaders of factions or divisions among us, he or they shall be sent over, at his or their own charges, as prisoners, to receive his or their trial or sentence, at the pleasure of his Highness and the Lords of his Council." This judicious and timely action of the legislature, founded, as it was, on the recommendation of the Protector, exerted a salutary influence in promoting peace and good order among the people of the colony. Quiet reigned once more among the settlements. Mr. Harris, with others of the leading agitators, who had never been at rest since the restoration of the charter, were subdued by the prompt and resolute stand thus taken by the authorities, and gave in their allegiance to the colony, and cried up government

and magistrates as much as they had cried them down before.

This quiet, however, was only temporary. Mr. Harris, whose mind seems to have been inherently prone to the wildest extremes, did not utterly abandon the disorganizing doctrines he had formerly avowed. He repressed them for a time, but soon began to publish them again, probably with still greater peril to the peace and good order of the state; so that Mr. Williams, near the close of his presidency, entered a formal complaint against him, at the General Court of Commissioners, for high treason against the commonwealth. The seditious pamphlet was read in the hearing of the Court, together with Mr. Williams's accusation and Mr. Harris's reply, and the Court decided that he was guilty of maintaining, in substance, that any one who can say, "it is his conscience, ought not to yield subjection to any human order amongst men." The question whether this really amounted to treason, was very properly referred to the judgment of the authorities in the mother country, and the offender, in the mean time, was bound "in good bonds to his good behavior until their sentence be known."

These proceedings, sanctioned, as they were, by many of the principal citizens, seem to have alienated Mr. Harris from the interests of Prov-

idence, and to have been the commencement of a long and bitter quarrel between him and Mr. Williams. The hostile feelings of both parties were often expressed in the strongest terms, and the most public manner, and seem to have continued unabated to the end of life, affording a melancholy instance of the weakness of our nature, and the inadequacy even of common interests and common sufferings to keep in subjection the evil passions of the human heart. How far Mr. Williams deserves to be blamed, either at the commencement or in the prosecution of this controversy, cannot now be determined. Yet, in a personal quarrel so bitter and so protracted as this proved to be, it seldom happens that the wrong lies wholly on one side of the question. It is probable that he allowed his feelings too much to affect his official conduct, and that severity and personal animosity were, perhaps, insensibly blended with his discharge of the duty, which belonged to him as a magistrate and a citizen. Cromwell was at this time too busily occupied, in settling the affairs of his immediate government, to give much attention to the petty seditions of a distant colony, and no answer was ever returned to the question referred to him by the Court. The accusation brought against Harris was, accordingly, never prosecuted.



While holding the office of President, Mr. Williams also made a series of efforts to establish more amicable relations with the neighboring colonies, and particularly with Massachusetts. She still asserted her jurisdiction over the people at Pawtuxet, a portion of whom acknowledged her authority, and thus occasioned incessant trouble to the authorities at Providence. The policy, which, from the beginning, she had pursued towards the settlements of Rhode Island, had become more and more vexatious and injurious, as their population increased and their interests multiplied. She allowed unrestricted commerce between her citizens and the people of every part of New England, the Dutch at New York, and even, to a considerable extent, with several of the tribes of Indians; but to the inhabitants of the heterodox colony she prescribed conditions and limitations, which operated greatly to their disadvantage. Her laws forbade the people of Rhode Island from purchasing fire-arms or ammunition within her jurisdiction, and she had repeatedly refused to relax anything in their execution, even when solicited, in the midst of imminent peril from the Indians, who, taking advantage of the unprotected condition of the colony, and her alienation from the other settlements of New England, constantly threatened her with petty



annoyances, and sometimes even with fearful massacre.

In the hope of changing this oppressive policy, Mr. Williams, on the 15th of November, 1655, addressed a letter to "the General Court of magistrates and deputies assembled at Boston," in which he earnestly remonstrated against a system of legislation, which brought so many grievances in its train, and by which the people of Rhode Island "seemed to be devoted to the Indian shambles and massacres." After a few months, he wrote a letter to the Governor of Massachusetts, and received from him, in return, an invitation to visit Boston, that he might present his requests to the General Court in person. He accordingly prepared an address, which he presented to the Court in the name of his colony, in which he set forth the evils and oppressions which had been brought about by their cruel legislation. So earnest were his representations, and so unwearied was his perseverance, that he at length succeeded in wringing from the stern and reluctant magistrates of the Bay some of the favors, which he sought for his fellow-citizens. These he immediately acknowledged in a brief note to the Assembly, full of expressions of gratitude and faithfulness to their service.

This was the first time, since his banishment,

that he had entered the territory of Massachusetts by the permission of the authorities. On former occasions, when he had landed at Boston, on his return from England, he was protected by an order from the Council; and once, when he had gone thither to embark, he was subjected to insult and molestation, as one who bore the name of outlaw. The invitation to visit Boston, sent to him by Governor Endicott, was the beginning of more amicable relations; and, though his sentence of banishment was never formally revoked, yet his reception in Massachusetts seems to have been a practical disavowal, on the part of the authorities, of any intention longer to enforce its decree.

In July of the year 1656, the first Quakers arrived at Boston. Deeply tinctured with the fanaticism of the age, the early representatives of this sect appear to have held in equal contempt the authority alike of the church and the state, and their fortunes in New England are admirably fitted to illustrate the amazing contrast between the spirit that ruled in Rhode Island, and that which animated the people and controlled the legislation of all the other colonies. No sooner had these new heretics landed in Massachusetts, than the guardians of the colony set themselves to accomplish their utter extermination. They were at first severe-

ly punished under the general statutes against heresy. But, these proving ineffectual, the sternest enactments were proclaimed against them. Heavy fines were imposed on any, who should bring Quakers into the colony, who should import any of their books, attend their meetings, or defend any of their heretical opinions. The Quakers themselves were to be whipped with twenty stripes, and kept at hard labor until they could be transported from the colony. These laws were subsequently made still more severe. Every Quaker who should return, after having been once banished, if a man, was to lose one ear; if a woman, to be severely whipped; and, after the second return, both men and women were to have their tongues bored through with a red-hot iron. The same punishment was also to be inflicted upon every one, who should embrace their faith within the colony. The law was still ineffectual, and the "accursed and pernicious sect" increased in spite of all the efforts of the authorities to suppress them, until, in October, 1658, a law was enacted, banishing them on penalty of death in case they should return.

Similar laws, though generally not so severe, were also passed by the other colonies of New England; and the commissioners of these colonies employed every means of persuasion to

induce Rhode Island to join in the general persecution. They twice addressed the General Assembly on the subject, urging them to withhold from the Quakers the privileges of citizenship, and forbid them from taking up their residence within the jurisdiction. But the authorities of Rhode Island remained true to the principles on which their society was constituted. To both the communications; which were addressed to them, they returned a respectful but decided answer, that they had "no law whereby to punish any for only declaring by words their minds and understandings concerning the things and ways of God, as to salvation and an eternal condition." They also, at the same time, expressed their disapprobation of the doctrines of the Quakers, and their determination to require of them, as of all others who should come to their settlements, a strict performance of all civil duties; "and, in case they refuse it, to make use of the first opportunity to inform the agent of the colony residing in England."

The reply, however, was not satisfactory to the commissioners of the United Colonies, who appear to have been incensed at the firm and consistent policy pursued by the authorities of Rhode Island. The commissioners wrote a third time to the General Assembly, sternly threatening that the colony should be excluded from



all relations of intercourse and trade with the rest of New England, unless she immediately joined in their exertions to accomplish the extermination of the Quakers. But the threats of the commissioners were now as impotent as had been their arguments on former occasions. The colonists regarded with abhorrence these extraordinary attempts to drive them from their cherished principles, which had been distinctly recognized in their charter, and interwoven with all their legislation. Still, for the purpose of protecting themselves against the threats of their powerful and confederate neighbors, they determined to appeal to the government in England. The General Assembly, at a meeting held at Warwick, in November, 1658, appointed a committee to address a letter to Mr. Clarke, their agent at the court of the Protector, in which, after setting forth the measures which had been adopted by the other colonies, they formally appeal to his Highness and Council, that "they may not be compelled to exercise any civil power over men's consciences, so long as human orders, in point of civility, are not corrupted or violated."

Thus ended the controversy between the New England commissioners and the colony of Rhode Island, respecting the toleration of Quakers. It began near the close of the presidency of Mr.



Williams, and was, doubtless, sustained on the part of the colony, in a great degree, by his agency and advice. The mild and tolerant policy, which she adopted, was in accordance with the principles in which he had laid the foundations of the commonwealth, and which had been incorporated into all her early legislation. It contrasts, in the happiest and most impressive manner, with that which was adopted by the other colonies of New England, and furnishes the most satisfactory evidence, that, amidst all the controversial excitements and irregularities of the times, the people of Rhode Island still cherished the "soul liberty," in the maintenance of which they had encountered the perils and hardships of the wilderness. From this liberal policy the colony was never induced to depart; and her history, up to the present day, presents the rare, perhaps solitary instance of a state existing for more than two hundred years, whose statute-book contains not a single law abridging the freedom of the conscience, or in any manner interfering with religious opinion or worship.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*He retires from the Presidency. — Charles the Second grants a new Charter to the Colony. — Williams appointed an Assistant in the Government. — His Labors for the Indians. — His Controversy with the Quakers. — King Philip's War. — The Services of Williams during the War. — Its Results. — The Close of his Life, and his Death.*

IN the preceding chapter we have narrated the principal events of the troubled period during which Mr. Williams occupied the post of President, or Governor, of the colony of Rhode Island. He retired from the office in May, 1658, whether by a voluntary withdrawal, or by a failure to secure the suffrages of his fellow-citizens, we cannot now determine. His experience in the office seems to have awakened no desire to continue in it or return to it. He never again aspired to the place of chief magistrate, though he was, a few years afterwards, elected a deputy from Providence, and repeatedly sat as an assistant, or member of the upper house of the colonial Assembly. He was also intrusted, by his fellow-citizens of Providence, with all the higher offices of the town, and especially with the

performance of most of those public duties which required superior tact and wisdom. After this period, however, he seems never to have taken a very active part in the government of the colony, though he did not neglect any opportunity, which his intelligent assiduity could employ, for promoting its interests or advancing the peace and social well-being of its people.

From the year 1651, when John Clarke and Roger Williams were sent forth together in the service of the colony, Clarke himself had remained in England, the faithful and indefatigable agent of the people of Rhode Island. On the restoration of Charles the Second, in 1660, a new commission was sent to him, urging him to prosecute his agency with the utmost diligence at the court of the restored monarch, whose views, it was feared, might be unfriendly to the interests of a colony, which owed its charter to the Long Parliament. At length, on the 8th of July, 1663, after a residence in England of eleven years, he had the happiness of receiving from the King a new charter for the colony, instituting a government clothed with more perfect authority, and better suited to the condition of the people, and still recognizing in full the same principle of unlimited freedom "in matters of religious concernments," on which the colony had been originally founded. The

charter was brought to New England by Captain George Baxter, and was presented to the General Court of Commissioners at Newport, on the 24th of November, 1663, and, on the following day, was read in the presence of "a very great meeting and assembly of the free-men of the colony." It was received by the colonists with demonstrations of no common joy. The sum of one hundred pounds was voted to Mr. Clarke, their "trusty and well-beloved friend," and thirty pounds to "George Baxter, the most faithful and happy bringer of the charter." The ancient record glows with the animated scenes it describes. "The charter," says the record, "was taken forth from the precious box which held it, and was read by Baxter in the audience and view of all the people; and the letters, with his majesty's royal stamp and the broad seal, with much beseeming gravity, were held up on high, and presented to the perfect view of the people."\*

In this instrument, the King, of his own authority, appointed the first Governor and assistants, who, according to its provisions, were to continue in office till the first Wednesday of May next ensuing. Benedict Arnold was cre-

---

\* See Goddard's *Address on the Occasion of the Change in the Civil Government of Rhode Island.* p. 17

ated Governor, and Roger Williams one of the assistants; and at the first meeting of the General Assembly, under the new government, he was appointed to transcribe the charter into the permanent records of the colony. Immediately on the organization of the new government, the prospects of the colony began to brighten. New energy was infused into all its members. In the following May, at the first general election held by the people, Mr. Williams was chosen an assistant, and, in connection with Mr. Clarke, was appointed to make a revision of the laws, that their requirements might be better understood and more thoroughly enforced. He was also appointed one of the commissioners to run the eastern boundary of the colony, which had been the subject of a protracted dispute both with Plymouth and Massachusetts.

The General Assembly, at the same time, in virtue of the additional importance given to the colony by the grant of a free charter, began to put forth a more decided authority, and to declare its decrees in a more peremptory tone, respecting the disturbers of the public peace, who still infested the settlements at Warwick and Pawtuxet. Amidst these new and happy auspices, the Assembly ordered that the word HOPE be inscribed over the anchor, which had already been adopted as the device of the colo-



nial seal, and the words "Rhode Island and Providence Plantations," the name given to the province in the new charter, be written around it, and that the same be henceforth the seal of the colony.

Such were the circumstances in which the second charter of Rhode Island went into operation. It was the freest charter, that ever bore the signature of a King, and was the astonishment of the age in which it was granted. Like that which preceded it, it secured the most perfect freedom in matters of conscience, and thus guarantied the perpetual exercise of the great principles on which the colony was founded. It continued to be the fundamental law of Rhode Island for nearly a hundred and eighty years, protecting the rights and securing the happiness of a long succession of generations, and "holding forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand, and best be maintained, with a full liberty in religious concerns;" and when it was supplanted, in 1843, by the present constitution of the state, it is believed to have been the oldest charter of civil government in the world.

For a period of many years after the new organization of the government, but few memorials can now be found of either the public or the private life of Mr. Williams. As has been

already mentioned, he was a deputy or representative from Providence, in 1667, and was chosen assistant again in 1670 and the following year, and also in 1677; but in the last instance, he declined the office, probably on account of the infirmities of age. His name also frequently appears in the records of the town, as moderator of its meetings, as the leading manager of public business, and especially as a member of most of the committees that were appointed to draft public documents, to conduct negotiations with the Indians, or to settle the disputes and strifes that were perpetually springing up among the petulant burghers of that day, respecting the boundaries of their lands, or the limits of the town.

He had now passed the meridian of his life, and had reached a period, when a man may well sequester himself from public affairs, and, amid leisure and repose, meditate the changes through which he has passed, and prepare for the still greater change that awaits him. But, though sharing little in the perplexities and toils of the government, he did not become indifferent to its prosperity or fame. He even watched with parental care over its interests, and was the author and adviser of many of the public measures of the time, with which his name does not now stand connected. He seems also

to have been in the habit, during this more retired period of his life, of going once in a month to the Narragansett country, the neighborhood where, many years before, he had kept a trading-house, for the purpose of preaching the gospel to the Indians, and the scattered English in those parts. And at a later day, when he was no longer able to leave his fireside, he wrote to Governor Bradstreet, of Massachusetts, to consult how he might print the sermons he had thus preached, for the benefit of the natives.

Though his influence with the Indian tribes, and especially with the Narragansetts, was greater than that of any other person, yet he seems to have encountered nothing but difficulty and discouragement in his labors for their religious instruction. They were singularly averse to the reception of Christianity; and, though they would listen to the teachings of Mr. Williams from their respect for his character, yet the truths of the gospel found no easy access to their darkened understandings. Then, too, the amazing difficulty, with which spiritual ideas were expressed in their rude and singular language, in itself presented an obstacle almost insurmountable. He has himself declared how "hard it is for any man to attain a little propriety of their language in common things, so as to escape

derision among them, in many years, without abundant conversing with them, in eating, travelling, and lodging with them ;” and refers for proof to John Eliot, who, though he had devoted his life to the study of their language and character, could not always make himself understood when he taught them the truths of religion. Cotton Mather says of the Indian words, that they must have been growing in length from the confusion of tongues at Babel, and Mr. Williams seems to have regarded the apostolic gift of tongues as alone adequate to the task of moulding their wild jargon into the clear expression of spiritual truth. His pious and generous-hearted labors, however, could not have been altogether in vain. He may have roused many a sluggish savage spirit to deep and earnest questioning of the mysteries of life, or planted the germs of virtue and piety in benighted minds, whose immortal destiny is known to God alone.

In the summer of 1672, Mr. Williams engaged in his famous controversy with the Quakers. Like most other controversies of the kind, it was a profitless war of words, and has attached to his memory an odium, which the motives that led him to engage in it are far from justifying. These motives he states to have been, first, the vindication of the name of God from the dis-



honor brought upon it by the Quakers ; secondly, to justify the colony for receiving them when banished from the other colonies ; thirdly, the hope that such a discussion would awaken " some soul-consideration " among the people, and thus save them from the errors he designed to expose.

The manners and modes of worship of the first advocates of the Quaker doctrines, who appeared in New England, were certainly sufficiently opposed to the purity of religion, and, in some instances at least, to the proprieties and decencies of civilized life. They excited the attention of the multitude by their noisy fervors, and sometimes wantonly provoked the persecutions they received. They scorned the ordinary courtesies of society, and gloried in rude manners and contemptuous expressions. The men would often insult the magistrates and ministers, as they passed their houses, and the women, laying aside the modesty of their sex, would run naked through the streets. Notwithstanding all this, they had been kindly received in Rhode Island, when driven from every other colony in New England, and were permitted to enjoy there every civil right and immunity, and, like all other citizens, to maintain undisturbed the peculiarities of their doctrine and worship. For this tolerant and truly magnanimous policy, this



clear-sighted deference to the supremacy of conscience, the fair fame of the colony had been traduced, and her citizens had been represented as fostering and approving all the errors, which her legislation had tolerated.

To the peculiar doctrines and practice of the early Quakers, Williams had always been strongly opposed. Though he never would allow them to be put down, or in any way molested, by the civil power, yet he regarded their notions as injurious to pure Christianity, and their conduct as pernicious to the morals and order of society. To declare his views respecting the prominent points of their belief, and to vindicate the colony from the aspersions which had been cast upon it for having received them to its jurisdiction, as we have seen, were among the motives which led him to engage in a controversy, which, though somewhat in accordance with the customs of that age, cannot now be regarded with approbation. In the month of July, 1672, he sent to George Fox, the distinguished founder of the sect, who was then at Newport, a formal challenge to a public discussion of fourteen propositions, into which he had drawn out his views. The challenge was in these words, and was addressed "To George Fox, or any other of my countrymen at Newport, who say they are the apostles and messengers of Christ Jesus. In

humble confidence of the help of the Most High, I offer to maintain, in public, against all comers, these fourteen propositions following, to wit; the first seven at Newport, and the other seven at Providence. For the time when, I refer it to George Fox and his friends at Newport." The propositions that accompanied the challenge affirmed, that the doctrines of the Quakers were unscriptural, and contrary to the well-being of society, and that, like Papacy, they tended to persecution, to rebellion, and to despotism. From some cause or other, they were not delivered to Fox, immediately on being sent to Newport, and he left the colony without having seen them. Mr. Williams always suspected, though on what grounds is not precisely known, that this was the result of a collusion between him and his friends, who wished him to avoid a public defence of his principles.

A discussion, however, was at length agreed upon, and was commenced at Newport, on the 9th of August. Mr. Williams was then in the seventy-third year of his age; yet was he able to row his boat, through a whole day, the distance of thirty miles, from Providence to Newport, where he arrived, as he says, "towards midnight, before the morning appointed." Three members of the sect, which he had come to assail, appeared as champions against him. Their

names were John Stubs, John Burnet, and William Edmundson. The two former he speaks of as able and learned men; the last, who was the chief speaker he characterizes as an ignorant and boisterous brawler. The debate began in the Quaker meeting-house, and lasted three days in Newport, and, on the 17th of the same month, was renewed at Providence, where it terminated after a single day, having produced no other effect than to exasperate the friends of both parties, and set them still more violently against each other.

That portion of the debate, especially, which was held in Newport, appears to have been a scene of tumult and confusion. The novel gladiatorship attracted a crowd of spectators; and, there being no moderator to preserve order and see fair play between the combatants, all took sides, and approved or condemned according to their varying tastes and opinions. Williams complains that he was often rudely interrupted; and when his brother Robert, at that time a schoolmaster in Newport, attempted to protect him from interruption, his interference was not allowed by the Quakers. Mr. Williams afterwards wrote out the discussion in full, which he published, together with an account of the motives that led to it, and the manner in which it was conducted. The book is entitled, "George

Fox digged out of his Burrowes ; or, an Offer of Disputation on fourteen Proposals, made this last Summer, 1672, (so called,) unto G. Fox, then present on Rhode Island, in New England, by R. W. ;” and, though displaying considerable learning, and a certain species of logical acuteness, is distinguished by a bitterness and severity of language unequalled in any other of his writings.

In the summer of 1675, the jealousies and hostilities, which had been so long gathering, in dark and threatening clouds, around the whole horizon of New England, broke out into a furious and desolating war. Philip, the able and ambitious chief of the Pokanokets, had aimed to establish a league among the tribes around him, that thus he might be able to punish what he conceived to be the wrongs of his race, and, if possible, gain back the lands they had lost, and drive the English from the country. Mr. Williams, as usual, in cases of trouble with the Indians, had been employed to allay the fury of Philip and his tribe, and had exerted himself to the utmost to prevent the still powerful Narragansetts from joining in the league. They at first promised neutrality, and renewed their treaty with the English ; but the remembrance of their ancient power, and especially of the murder of their favorite chief, Miantonomo, was suf-



ficient to obliterate from their minds the obligations of their treaty, and even their dread of English arms. They joined themselves to Philip, and their four thousand warriors rushed to the combat, that soon extended to every part of New England. Town after town was burnt, and the war spread dismay and distress to the homes of every settlement of the English, and for a time seemed to threaten the annihilation of the colonies. Many of the people of Providence, and of the other towns of Rhode Island, removed to Newport, with their families.

Mr. Williams, however, remained at home, and was among the most active of the citizens in watching the movements of the foe, and preparing for their attack. Though his age was upwards of seventy-six years, yet he accepted a commission as captain in the militia of the colony, drilled the companies in Providence, and held them in constant readiness for active service. He also sent a petition to the town, for leave to convert one of the houses into a garrison, and to erect other defences "for security to women and children." The petition was granted, and the defences were raised entirely at private expense, for defraying which he subscribed the sum of ten pounds, by far the largest sum on the list of the subscriptions. At a subsequent period, the General Assembly established a garri-



son at Providence, and placed it under the command of Captain Fenner, with the express provision in the orders that were given him, that his authority should "not eclipse Captain Williams's power, in the exercise of the train-bands there."

In spite, however, of the preparations for defence, Providence shared the fate of so many other towns in New England. It was attacked by the Indians on the 29th of March, 1676; twenty-nine houses were reduced to ashes, and among them that in which the town records were kept. The records themselves were partially destroyed, and the remaining portions were saved only by being thrown into a pond, from which they were afterwards recovered. It is said, in the ancient traditions of Providence, that, when the Indians appeared on the heights north of the town, Mr. Williams took his staff, and went forth to meet them, hoping to turn away their vengeance, as he had often done before. But they were too much exasperated to yield to his influence. Some of the older chiefs, who had long known him, came towards him as they saw him approaching, and told him that they were his friends, but that their young men were too much enraged for him to venture among them with safety. He returned to the garrison, and witnessed the desolation of the town. This terrible war was at length brought to a close by

the death of King Philip, in August, 1676, but not till it had cost the colonies an immense expenditure both of treasure and blood. The disbursements and losses are said to have equalled half a million of dollars. Thirteen New England towns were entirely destroyed, and six hundred houses were burnt, and about six hundred of the colonists, or one in twenty of all the able-bodied men, were killed. There was mourning in every family, for every one had lost a kinsman or a friend.

But to the Indians the war was productive of still more terrible results. Hunted down and driven from their hiding-places by the persevering energy of their more civilized foes, their bravest chiefs all slain or taken captive, they presented, at its close, but a feeble remnant of the proud race, who had defied the vengeance of the white men. The Pokanokets were entirely exterminated, and the Narragansetts were so crippled and reduced, that scarcely a hundred of them returned to occupy the deserted lodges of the tribe. The rest had all perished by the sword, by fire, or by famine, or had been taken captive by their conquerors. The body of King Philip was treated with shameful indignity; his head was severed from his body, and exposed on a gibbet at Plymouth, and one of his hands

was sent to Boston. The Indians who were taken captive in the war, including the son of King Philip, the last of the race of Massasoit, were sold into slavery, either among the colonists at home, or in the Island of Bermuda. The captives, who were brought to Providence, were distributed among the heads of families on the following conditions, viz., "*All under five years to serve till thirty; above five, and under ten, till twenty-eight; above ten, to fifteen, till twenty-seven; above fifteen, to twenty, till twenty-six years; from twenty to thirty, shall serve eight years; all above thirty, seven years.*" These conditions were recommended by a committee appointed by the town to report a plan for the disposal of the captive Indians; and, though the slavery to which they were reduced hardly involved the idea of absolute property in their persons, yet it is with pain and disappointment that we read the name of Roger Williams first among the committee who sanctioned them. Thus ended the history of the race he had so often befriended; and he may have regarded their servitude as the only condition compatible with the peace and safety of the colonies of New England. His hopes of their civilization and improvement were well nigh extinguished by the melancholy doom which settled around them.

and which seems to be the inevitable fate of every savage race, when brought into collision with the arts and arms of civilized man.

Mr. Williams's life was now rapidly declining amid the shadows of evening, and but few more events remain to be recorded in its checkered history. Old age, however, to him was not a season of quiet and repose. He had devoted his life to the maintenance of one great principle; and, though he had seen it embodied and carried into operation in the civil community around him, yet the principle was still a despised and persecuted one, and was regarded, even by the best and wisest men of New England, as the dream of enthusiasm. Its permanent triumph was yet to be secured. This made him exceedingly sensitive to any abuse of the freedom of conscience, which sprang up among the people of the colony. He was disquieted at their strifes and discords, and was constantly engaged in endeavoring to settle the questions that gave rise to them. After the close of the war, he seems still to have continued his monthly visits to Narragansett, for the purpose of preaching to the English and the Indians, who dwelt there.

In May, 1677, he was again chosen an assistant, but did not accept the office. In January, 1681, he presented to the town a paper entitled



"Considerations touching Rates," containing a series of maxims demonstrating the necessity of civil government, and the duty of every citizen to share in the burdens it imposes. The fact, that such considerations were needed, shows that the community, of which he was the founder, was still disturbed by those lawless and self-willed men, who are willing to enjoy all the blessings of regulated society, but shrink from every sacrifice it demands, and every labor it enjoins. With such men as these he had to contend as long as he lived; and the latest recorded act of his life was to affix his signature to a document, which was intended to settle the long-protracted controversy respecting that most prolific subject of disputes, the Pawtuxet lands. This document bears the date of January 16th, 1683, and is the last that remains of the waymarks along the journey of his life. The precise time of his death is nowhere mentioned. It must have occurred in the early part of the year 1683; for a letter written from Providence on the 10th of May, by Mr. John Thornton to the Reverend Samuel Hubbard, makes the following mention of his death; "The Lord hath arrested by death our ancient and approved friend, Mr. Roger Williams, with divers others here."

This is the only record that can now be



found of the death of the venerable founder of Rhode Island. He was in the eighty-fourth year of his age; and, though weakened by physical infirmities, yet he seems to have possessed to the last the full vigor of his intellectual faculties. He was buried at Providence, on the spot which he had selected as the burial-place of his family, with appropriate funeral honors, "and with all the solemnity the colony was able to show."\* Though, like most of the early colonists, he lived to an age far beyond the ordinary lot of man, yet his wife, and all his children, are believed to have survived him.

---

## CHAPTER XV.

*His religious Opinions. — His Views respecting the Clergy. — Political Opinions. — Character as a Writer. — General Remarks.*

IN the preceding pages we have purposely avoided any account of the change in religious opinions, if such it deserves to be called, which has rendered the subject of this sketch so cele-

---

\* Callender, Elton's edition, p. 147, note.

brated in the ecclesiastical annals of New England. Unfortunately, though much has been written, but little can now be known respecting it. As we have already stated, he received his ordination, as a minister of the gospel, from the hands of an Episcopal bishop of the established church in England, and, before leaving that country, was settled as a parish preacher. After his arrival in Massachusetts, like most of the other Puritan divines, he adopted the Congregational mode of worship and form of church government; and though, while there, he was charged with holding opinions "tending to Anabaptistry," as it was called, yet the charge is supposed to have related to his principles of religious liberty, which were considered dangerous and disorganizing, rather than to an adoption of the sentiments of the Baptists. The validity of infant baptism, and, indeed, of any baptism by sprinkling, was, at that period, just beginning to be called in question, among the Puritans, by here and there an inquiring spirit; and Roger Williams, though not the first to embrace the new opinions, yet, with his characteristic independence, was the first in New England to carry them out into practice. We know nothing of the reasons which led him to the step. We only know that he became convinced that his early baptism was invalid, and

was baptized by immersion, according to the usage of the Baptists, in March, 1639, by Ezekiel Holliman, a respectable citizen of Providence. He subsequently administered the ordinance to Mr. Holliman, and to others of the settlers there, who immediately united in forming the First Baptist Church in that town, which was also the first of that persuasion upon this continent.

But the doubt, which had been once awakened respecting the tenets of his early faith, unfortunately did not end with discarding his baptism when an infant. He soon became dissatisfied with other institutions of the church, and especially doubted the apostolic authority of all the orders of the clergy then existing. This led him still further to distrust, and ultimately to reject, not only his own baptism, but all baptism whatever, "because not derived from the authority of the apostles, otherwise than by the ministers of England, whom he judged to be ill authority."\* For these reasons, though, it appears, in a manner perfectly amicable, he left the church, which he had aided in forming, a few months after its organization, and became what, in the history of New England, is denom-

---

\* This is the language of Governor Winthrop, and with this view the writings of Williams agree.

inated a *Seeker*; a term not inaptly applied to those, who, in any age of the church, become dissatisfied with its prevailing creeds and institutions, and seek for more congenial views of truth, or a faith better adapted to their spiritual wants. He regarded all the churches of Christendom as, in some sense, in a state of apostasy, and the clergy, of every name, as having fallen from their priestly office, and lost their true apostolic authority; and he looked for a new commission to be given from Heaven, to restore the sacred succession of apostles, and reestablish, on their primitive basis, the ordinances of the gospel.

His singular views on this subject are set forth at length in his writings, especially in his "Hireling Ministry none of Christ's." One of the propositions maintained in this work is, that "the apostolical commission and ministry is long since interrupted and discontinued. Yet, ever since the beast Antichrist arose, the Lord hath stirred up the ministry of prophecy, who must continue their witness and prophecy, until their witness be finished, and slaughters, probably, near approaching, be accomplished." This ministry of witnesses and prophets he recognized as the only one now extant. He allowed to them the right to bear witness to the truth, and to vindicate it from the attacks of all who should assail

it; but he denied their authority to rule the church, or to administer the ordinances of religion.

These views respecting the ministry were, probably, to a considerable extent at least, the result of his own unfortunate experience with the clergy of his time, both in England and America. He saw them, even in these most favored parts of Christendom, sanctioning the use of the civil sword, in maintaining the purity of the church, and in extending the triumphs of the gospel. He had himself suffered from their bitter denunciations, and had been a witness of their zeal for persecution; and, as he compared their practice with the qualities most insisted on in the sacred Scriptures, it is not strange that, with his views of the sanctity of conscience, he should be disposed to question their apostolic character and authority.

These opinions, however, extraordinary as they now appear, did not abate an iota his interest in religious truth, or in the conversion of others to the Christian faith. With a zeal which never tired till near the close of a long life, "by many tedious journeys," he constantly labored for the religious good of the ignorant and the destitute around him; and when too old to preach any longer, we find him by his fireside, striving to recollect the heads of his numerous



discourses, that he might print them for the benefit of the Narrangansett Indians and others. For this purpose, he was obliged to apply to his friends for aid ; and, too poor himself to promise payment, he appeals to a nobler motive, and says that "he who hath a shilling, and a heart to countenance and promote such a soul-work, may trust the great Paymaster for an hundred for one in this life." \*

Still less did his peculiar views respecting the institutions and outward observances of religion diminish his faith in the fundamental principles of morals. In every sphere of life in which he moved ; in the controversies in which he was engaged ; in all his commerce with both civilized and barbarous men, he everywhere recognized them as matters of unchanging obligation. His adherence to what he regarded as the dictates of truth and justice, his generous respect for the rights of the Indians, and his philanthropic interest in their improvement, and conversion to Christianity, separate him from the great majority of the founders of states, and place him, in all the relations of equity and peace, by the side of the noble-minded William Penn. Even his worst enemies have never breathed a reproach upon his morals. Cotton Mather, who says, in

---

\* Letter to Governor Bradstreet.

his quaint folly, that he had a windmill in his head, yet admits that he had *the root of the matter* in his heart; while his friends, from a nearer observation of his virtues, pronounce him to have been "one of the most disinterested men that ever lived; a most pious and heavenly-minded soul."\*

The record of his life, and of the labors in which he was engaged, is perhaps the best delineation of his character. Of its minuter personal traits it may now be difficult to form any distinct conception. Its leading features appear to have had their origin in his steadfast love of truth, and his boldness and independence in declaring it. It may have been wanting in the graces and accomplishments, which cultivated life alone can impart; but it was still radiant with some of the noblest and most commanding qualities of humanity. His faults were such as generally spring from an ardent and excitable temperament. He was sometimes hasty and rash in forming his opinions, and too unyielding and uncompromising in maintaining them. But that he was also magnanimous and benevolent, patient of suffering and forgiving of injuries, and unwavering in his devotion to the interests of truth, and liberty, and virtue, his whole life bears

---

\* Callender, p. 72.

constant testimony. He could not be a time-server or a parasite. He could fawn neither at the footstool of power nor at the tribunal of public opinion. He was true to the promptings of his own moral nature, and he followed them, with reverence, whithersoever they led him.

His political opinions were, in the main, those of the Puritans and the Independents; though he stopped far short of the extremes to which some of the leaders of the popular party pushed their principles, in the fierce contests of that revolutionary age. On but few of the great questions, which then agitated England, has he left any expression of his opinion. The scenes of his life were too remote and too humble to render it necessary, or even possible, for him to take any decided stand in the general politics of the day. But, though sympathizing strongly with the popular party, and on terms of friendly intimacy with many of its most eminent leaders, yet he could not sanction some of its measures; and, amid all the changes in the government, he never withheld his allegiance from the constituted authorities of the realm, whether Parliament, Protector, or King. He has declared, in one of his writings, his disapprobation of the execution of Charles the First, and seems seriously to have doubted whether it would not have been better to suffer all the evils of tyr-

anny, rather than plunge the nation into the calamities of the civil wars.

His industry in every enterprise which he undertook was indefatigable. His life was one long season of incessant work, and this in nearly every sphere of exertion which the times presented. He placed the highest estimate upon the value of time. "One grain of its inestimable sand," says he, "is worth a golden mountain;" and it was only in the spirit of such a maxim, that he could have accomplished so much, both of intellectual and physical labor, in the unpropitious circumstances in which he was placēd. His knowledge, especially in history and theology, appears to have been extensive, and his scholarship in the classic languages unusually varied and exact. As a writer, he had little time, and, it may be, little taste for the elegances of language. His style, however, is usually earnest and forcible, and sometimes sparkles with animating beauty, though it more generally rolls roughly along through sentences involved and wearisome from their want of clearness and harmony. But when we reflect, that much of his time was spent away from cultivated society, in providing for the mere physical necessities of life, amid the depressions of poverty, and the hardships of an infant settlement, as he himself describes it, "at the hoe and at the oar for

bread," our wonder is, that he was able to write so much, and especially to write so well; and we pardon the rudeness of his style, as we think of the noble principles of spiritual freedom it embodies, and of the toils and sufferings he endured in making them familiar to mankind.

But it is not upon his writings that the fame of Roger Williams most depends, or that his claims to the respect and gratitude of the world principally rest. His name, especially in this country, has long since become identified with the great principle of political philosophy, which he spent the greater part of his life, and his best energies, in supporting and carrying into practice. This principle of the supremacy of conscience, the underived independence of the soul, now so familiar and well understood, was, in the age in which he lived, a startling paradox, and, in the judgment of his contemporaries, prolific only of evils both to the church and the state. He alone conceived it in its true import and application, and he fearlessly announced it as an elemental truth in morals. Starting with the great doctrines of the reformation, the right of private judgment, and man's accountability to God alone for his religious faith and worship, he demonstrated his sublime principle. To set it forth, to vindicate it from the persecutions with which it was assailed, to



rescue it from the selfish ends to which it was perverted; this was the noble mission of his life, to which he sacrificed comfort and ease, and all his hopes of worldly preferment.. In the pursuit of this end he never wavered. In public and in private life, as a minister and a legislator, amid the rudeness and penury of his plantation in the wilderness, or in the society of scholars and statesmen in the mother country, he kept it constantly in view, as the radiant pole-star of his hopes and aims.

His days were passed amid the obscurity of a New England settlement, a sphere too narrow and humble to call out the full energies of his character. Had he returned, like Sir Henry Vane, to England, he might have asserted his noble principles on the floor of the British Parliament, or uttered them at the Board of the Council of State. His influence could not fail to be felt, and his name might have stood, on the page of English history, among the brightest and best of the republican statesmen of the time. But he was reserved for a less conspicuous, though scarcely an humbler destiny, to become the founder of a state in the American confederacy, and the first advocate, in modern Christendom, of the entire freedom of conscience. The truths for whose sake he was persecuted and banished, and which he toiled so long to es-

tablish, have become incorporated into our whole social system, and, like many of the most useful arts, from their very commonness and familiarity, have now ceased to remind us of their original discoverer and advocate. But he, who analyzes our American civilization, and traces the influences that now control it back to the sources whence they sprang, will not fail to appreciate the character, and do honor to the name, of **ROGER WILLIAMS.**

## APPENDIX.

---

### No. I.

#### *Charges against Rhode Island.*

Two several charges have been brought against Rhode Island, for having trespassed upon the principles of religious liberty in which she was originally founded. The first is contained in Chalmers's "Political Annals," Book I. Chap. XI. pp. 276-279. He states, that, at the meeting of the General Assembly, in March, 1664, a law was passed, containing the following passage; viz., "That all men *professing Christianity*, of competent estates, and of civil conversation, who acknowledge and are obedient to the civil magistrates, though of different judgments in religious affairs, *Roman Catholics only excepted*, shall be admitted freemen, or may choose or be chosen colonial officers." A statute, containing the passage above quoted, is found in the edition of the "Laws of Rhode Island," which was printed in 1745, the earliest edition, of which any copies are now extant. But it is certain, that no law containing the clauses written in Italics, was passed in 1664; nor can such a law now be found at all in the records

of the colony. The late Honorable Samuel Eddy, who was Secretary of State, in Rhode Island, from 1797 to 1819, and who examined the records with the utmost care, and with reference to this very exclusion, states that he found nothing relating to it, "nor anything that gives any preference or privileges to men of one set of religious opinions over those of another."

The words printed in *Italics* are now generally regarded as an interpolation, and are supposed to have been inserted, at a date long subsequent to 1664, by some committee for the revisal of the early laws, or by some friend of the colony, who thus sought to rescue its reputation, in England, from the odium which might have been attached to the toleration of Roman Catholics, and those who were not Christians. This supposition is rendered in a high degree probable, by the considerations, that such an exclusion conflicts with the principles of Roger Williams, and with the whole spirit of both the charters and all the early legislation of the colony; that no such exclusion was ever carried into effect in the colony; and, lastly, that the identical law, the excluding clauses being removed, was actually passed by the General Assembly, in 1664, in which Roger Williams sat as an assistant, or member of the upper house. For the views of Mr. Eddy, drawn out in full, see Walsh's "*Appeal*," pp. 427-435.

The other charge is contained in an article signed Francis Brinley, (*Massachusetts Historical Collections*, Vol. V.,) which asserts, that, in 1665, the Quakers were outlawed for refusing to bear arms.

This statement, however, turns out to be as destitute of truth as the preceding. The origin of the charge is explained, and its falsity clearly pointed out, in an article, also from the pen of Mr. Eddy, contained in the Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series, Vol. VII. p. 97. From this article it appears, that, in 1665, the commissioners of the colonies, in the name of the King, ordered that all householders, inhabiting the colony of Rhode Island, should take the oath of allegiance. The General Assembly, however, replied that it had always been the practice of the colony, out of respect to the rights of conscience, to allow those, who objected to the taking of an oath, to make a solemn asseveration, on the penalties of perjury. An engagement was accordingly drawn up, which, in obedience to the authority of the King, the inhabitants of the colony were required to take, or lose their privileges as freemen. By the terms of the engagement, the individual promised to bear allegiance to the King and his successors, and "to yield due obedience to the laws established from time to time." To this latter clause the Quakers took exception, because it would require them to comply with the militia laws then in being. They refused to take the engagement, and were accordingly disfranchised; a result which formed no necessary part of the purposes of the law, and which is to be ascribed rather to the order of the commissioners, than to the action of the legislature. The form of the engagement was altered the next year, on purpose to suit the scruples of the Quakers.

Such is the manner in which these charges, brought



against the fidelity of Rhode Island to the principles of her founder, have been answered and refuted, by a gentleman who was perfectly acquainted with the spirit of her institutions and the history of her legislation,

---

## No. II.

### *Account of Roger Williams's Writings.*

THE titles of but few of the writings of Roger Williams have found their way into any of the larger bibliographical works of our language. Many of them are, consequently, now exceedingly rare, and seldom accessible to the general reader. On this account, the following description of those, which are known to exist, is presented to the attention of readers who may be curious in such things.

I. His earliest published work bears the following title; "A Key into the Language of America, or an Help to the Language of the Natives in that Part of America called New England; together with briefe Observations of the Customs, Manners, and Worships, &c., of the aforesaid Natives, in Peace and Warre, in Life and Death. On all which are added spiritual Observations, generall and particular, by the Author, of chiefe and special Use (upon all Occasions) to all the English inhabiting those Parts; yet pleasant and prof-

itable to the View of all Men. By Roger Williams, of Providence, in New England. London, printed by Gregory Dexter, 1643."

This work was written while at sea, on his first voyage to England, in the summer of 1643, as a help to his own memory, that he might not lightly lose what he "had so dearly bought by hardship and charges among the barbarians." It comprises one hundred and ninety-seven pages of small duodecimo, and is dedicated to his "well-beloved countrymen in Old and New England." It is divided into thirty-two chapters, each of which is devoted to some subject connected with the manners and character of the Indians, and contains specimens of the principal words in their language which relate to that subject. Each chapter, also, closes with pious reflections, and a few verses, which compare very well with productions of most of the New England bards of that day. The "Key" is by far the best known of Mr. Williams's works, and is still of the highest authority respecting the subject of which it treats. A few copies of the original edition still remain, and are occasionally noticed in the catalogues. The greater part of the work has been republished in the third and fifth volumes of the Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections. It is also contained entire in the first volume of the Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society. A copy of the original edition is in the library of Harvard College.

II. The second work which Mr. Williams published is entitled, "Mr. Cotton's Letter, lately printed, Examined and Answered. By Roger Williams, of

Providence, in New England. London, imprinted in the year 1644." It is a small quarto, of forty-seven pages, preceded by an address, of two pages, to "The Impartial Reader." From this address, it appears that, soon after the banishment of Williams, Mr. Cotton sent him a letter, in which he vindicates the act of the magistrates in sending him away, though he denies that he had any agency in procuring it. The letter also states the opinions of Mr. Williams, which led to his banishment, and points out "the sandiness of the grounds" on which they rested. Of this letter, the work above mentioned contains a full examination and refutation. Its tone is highly courteous, and the dilemmas in which it often places Mr. Cotton show the clearness, with which Mr. Williams had conceived his opinions, and "the rocky strength of the grounds" on which he planted them. The work is now exceedingly rare. The copy I have examined is in the possession of the family of the late Moses Brown, of Providence. There is also a copy, somewhat mutilated, in the library of Yale College.

III. His next publication is entitled, "The Bloody Tenent of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, discussed, in a Conference between Truth and Peace, who, in all tender Affection, present to the High Court of Parliament (as the Result of their Discourse) these (amongst other Passages) of highest consideration." It was printed in London, in 1644, without the name either of the writer or the publisher, and comprises two hundred and forty-seven pages, of small quarto. In the library of Brown University are two copies of the work, which appear to

be of separate editions, though both printed within the same year. There is a slight difference in the type and orthography of the title-page, and of the captions of some of the chapters. The earlier copy also contains a list of *errata* at the end, which are corrected in the later edition. In all other respects the two copies are precisely alike.

The singular origin of the work well illustrates the spirit of the times. A person, who had been confined in Newgate for opinion's sake, wrote a letter against the use of the civil power in cases of conscience. The letter was written with milk, on sheets of paper brought to the prison by stealth, as stoppers to the milk-bottle. After its publication, it was sent to Mr. Cotton, of Boston, who wrote an answer to the views it contained. This answer to what was thus written in milk, in support of the mild and benignant doctrines of toleration, is represented as written in blood, and is hence styled by Williams "The Bloody Tenent." Both the letter from Newgate and the answer of Mr. Cotton are printed in the work, and form the basis of the dialogue between Truth and Peace. The whole is prefaced by a Dedication to the "Right Honorable, both Houses of the High Court of Parliament," and by an "Address to every Courteous Reader." The work was written during the author's first visit to England, and though, as he says, prepared for the public "in change of rooms and corners, yea, sometimes, in variety of strange houses, sometimes in the fields in the midst of travel," it is yet the best written of all his works, and sets forth his doctrines of religious freedom very fully, and in a



style always animated, and sometimes highly beautiful. It has never been republished, and copies are now seldom offered for sale, though, when offered, they always command a high price. There is a copy of this work in the library of Harvard College.

Mr. Cotton wrote a reply to this work, which was published in 1647, and was entitled, "The Bloody Tenet Washed and made White in the Blood of the Lamb, being discussed and discharged of Blood-guiltyness, by just Defence." The author contended for the right and the duty of the civil magistrate to punish for errors of doctrine, and endeavored to vindicate the practice at that time so prevalent among the settlements of the Puritans.

IV. Mr. Williams's fourth publication was a rejoinder to this work of Mr. Cotton's. It has the following title-page, which is sufficiently descriptive of its contents; "The Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody, by Mr. Cotton's Endeavor to wash it white in the Blood of the Lambe, of whose precious Blood spilt in the Blood of his Servants, and of the Blood of Millions spilt in former and later Wars for Conscience' Sake, that most Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience, upon a second Tryal, is now found more apparently, and more notoriously guilty. In this Rejoynder to Mr. Cotton are principally, 1. The Nature of Persecution; 2. The Power of the Civill Sword in Spiritualls examined; 3. The Parliament's Permission of dissenting Consciences justified. Also (as a Testimony to Mr. Clarke's Narrative) is added a Letter to Mr. Endicott, Governor of the Massachusetts, in N. E. By R. Williams, of Providence, in



New England. London, printed for Giles Calvert, and are to be sold at the Black Spread Eagle, at the West End of Paul's, 1652." It is a small quarto, and, including the letter to Governor Endicott, and an appendix to the clergy of Old and New England, Scotland, and Ireland, comprises three hundred and twenty pages. This work discusses the same great questions as the preceding, and maintains the same views, with additional arguments. Both are pervaded with a mildness quite unusual in the controversial writings of that day, and are enriched with an amount of learning that does credit to the varied scholarship of their author. This second work is believed to be even more rare than the first. There are two copies in the library of Brown University, one of which is the presentation copy, which Mr. Williams gave to his friend and fellow-laborer in the service of the colony, Dr. John Clarke. It contains the following inscription, in his own hand-writing; "For his honored and beloved Mr. John Clarke, an eminent witness of Christ Jesus ag'st ye bloodie Doctrine of Persecution, &c." There is likewise a copy in the library of Harvard College.

V. In the same year, in which he wrote the Rejoinder to Mr. Cotton, and while he was on his second visit to England, he also wrote and published another treatise on the same general subject as the two preceding. It is entitled, "The Hireling Ministry None of Christ's, or a Discourse touching the Propagating the Gospel of Christ Jesus; Humbly presented to such Pious and Honorable Hands, whom the present Debate thereof concerns. By Roger Wil-

liams, of Providence, in New England. London, printed in the Second Month, 1652." This book is also a small quarto, of thirty-six pages. It is, in reality, an argument against an established church, and the support of the clergy by law, and not, as its title would now seem to import, against the pecuniary compensation of ministers of the gospel. It is a sort of supplement to his other writings on religious liberty, in which he explains his singular views respecting the ministry, and earnestly contends for the right of "all the people of the three nations to choose and maintain what worship and ministry their souls and consciences are persuaded of." Only two copies of this work are known now to exist in this country, and these are both in the library of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester. One of them has been lent to the writer, by the courtesy of the directors of that institution.

VI. He is also said to have published, during the same year, while residing in England, another small volume, entitled, "Experiments of Spiritual Life and Health, and their Preservatives. London, 1652." I am not aware that any copy of this work now exists in this country, nor is there any account given of it in any of the ordinary works of bibliography.

VII. The last of Roger Williams's published writings is the account of the controversy he had with the Quakers. It was printed at Boston, in 1676, and bears the following title: "George Fox digg'd out of his Burrowes, or an Offer of Disputation, on fourteen Proposals made this last Summer, 1672, (so call'd,) unto G. Fox, then present on Rode

Island, in New England, by R. W. As also how (G. Fox slily departing,) the Disputation went on, being managed three Dayes at Newport on Rode Island, and one Day at Providence, between John Stubbs, John Burnet, and William Edmundson, on the one Part, and R. W. on the other. In which many Quotations out of G. Fox and Ed. Burrowes Book in Folio are alleadged. With an Appendix, of some Scores of G. F., his simple lame Answers to his Opposites in that Book quoted and replied to, By R. W. of Providence in N. E. Boston, printed by John Foster, 1676."

The book derives its quaint title from the accidental combination of the names Fox and Burrowes in the work, which had been written in defence of the Quakers. It also contains a number of similar puns upon these names, scattered through the discussion. Like most of his other writings, it is in small quarto, and comprises, in all, three hundred and twenty-seven pages, of which two hundred and eight are devoted to an account of the controversy, and one hundred and nineteen to the Appendix. It is dedicated to "The King's Majesty, Charles II.," and commences with two prefatory addresses, one to "The People called Quakers," and the other "To those many Learned and Pious Men, whom G. Fox hath so sillily and scornfully answered in his Book in Folio. Especially to those whose Names I have been bold to mention in the Narrative and Appendix, Mr. Richard Baxter, Mr. John Owen, &c."

Though written at a late period of life, when, in most men, the fires of passion have burned out, it is yet the most violent and denunciatory of all his wri-

tings. The manner in which the discussion at Newport was managed was exceedingly irritating and harassing, and the recollection of this seems to have remained in his mind, and to have infused its bitterness into the narrative in which he has embodied his arguments. The book has never been republished. A copy of it is contained in the library of Harvard College.

Roger Williams appears to have written several other works, which either were never published, or have long since perished. Among these was the Treatise he wrote while at Plymouth, respecting the patent granted by King James to the New England colonies. This was the book which occasioned him so much trouble during his second residence at Salem. There is no reason to believe that it was ever published. In his "Key to the Indian Languages," he speaks of having "further treated of the natives of New England, and that great point of their conversion, in an additional Discourse." This Treatise, which may have been printed, has probably perished. No trace of it can now be found. He also, near the close of his life, prepared for publication a volume of the sermons he had preached at Narragansett, and wrote to Governor Bradstreet to solicit aid in printing it. The volume, however, seems never to have gone to the press.

I have thus mentioned all the works of Roger Williams, which are now known to be extant, or of which any account has been preserved. They were regarded with little favor, on this side of the Atlantic, at the time of their publication, on account of



the general hostility of the Puritans to his doctrines of religious freedom, and to the interests of the colony which he founded. Most of them were originally printed in London, and it is not improbable that many more copies of them all may now be found in Great Britain than in this country. It is to be hoped, however, that, of the few that remain, a complete set may yet be collected for some one of the public libraries of Rhode Island.

In addition to those works, which were prepared specially for publication, there is a large number of letters and documents relating to both public and private affairs. Many of these have been published in the early volumes of the Massachusetts Historical Collections, and also in Mr. Knowles's Memoir. Others are scattered about in the possession of individuals, or in places of public deposit. Of the published letters, that written, in 1670, to Major Mason, of Connecticut, is by far the most interesting and valuable, and contains the fullest account, which he has left on record, of the period of his banishment, and his planting the settlement at Providence. No one can read it without admiring the simplicity of the narrative, or without feeling a lively sympathy for the perils he encountered, and the sufferings he endured.





**L I F E**  
**OF**  
**T I M O T H Y   D W I G H T ,**

**P R E S I D E N T   O F   Y A L E   C O L L E G E ;**

**B Y**

**W I L L I A M   B .   S P R A G U E ,   D . D**

FILE

THOMAS D. WRIGHT

RECORD OF THE COURT

WILLIAM S. BAKER, JR.

## PREFACE.

---

THE great end, which Biography contemplates, is the exhibition of character. There are two ways of reaching this end. One is, by exhibiting the incidents in detail which make up an individual's life, including both the actions which he has performed, and the events which have occurred to him, and then referring the external to the internal, judging of what he is by what he does and what he experiences. The other mode is, by presenting the various qualities of which his character is composed, and then using whatever belongs to his history only as illustrative and confirmatory. Where the life is unusually filled up with incident, a simple narrative of what the individual did, and what happened to him, may suffice, without any attempt at formal or extended delineation.

Dr. Dwight's life, as must be apparent to any one, who takes the most general view of it, was comparatively barren of incident. The spheres in which he chiefly moved were those of a minister of the gospel in a country parish, and the

president of a college ; and though it would be difficult to designate two more important stations than these, yet neither of them was likely to furnish a theatre for much beyond a regular routine of common-place duties. With this dearth of historic materials consequent upon his profession, the latter of the two kinds of biography just referred to has, for the most part, been adopted. The author has endeavored to sketch the prominent features of his character chiefly from recollection, and then to illustrate and verify his statements by the leading facts connected with his history.

It can scarcely be necessary to state, that a large portion of the facts, which are here embodied, are to be found in different sketches of his life, that have long been before the public, though they have been exhibited, hitherto, in a form quite different from the present. Some of the incidents, it is believed, have never before had any more substantial record than the memory of his friends. The author begs in this way to proffer his acknowledgments to several highly respectable gentlemen, some of them intimate friends of Dr. Dwight, from whom he has received important communications in aid of his object.

The only embarrassment, which has been experienced from this mode of constructing the



biography, has resulted from the necessity of occasionally anticipating under one head what more appropriately belonged to, and was to be more particularly considered, under a subsequent one. With a view to remedy this inconvenience, and enable the reader intelligently to peruse the several parts of the work as they occur, it has been thought proper to incorporate in a single paragraph the leading events of his life in chronological order.

He was born in 1752; was graduated at Yale College in 1769; was chosen tutor in that institution in 1771, and held the office for six years; was chaplain in the army in 1777 and the year following; resided at Northampton, where he acted in various capacities, from 1778 to 1783; was installed pastor of the Congregational church at Greenfield, Connecticut, in 1783; was removed hence to the presidency of Yale College in 1795; and died in 1817.



# TIMOTHY DWIGHT.

---

## CHAPTER I.

*His Birth and Parentage. — Physical Character.  
— Habits of Exercise.*

IN the investigation of any subject, it is the order of nature to penetrate from the outer to the inner, to pass from the nearer to the more remote. The attributes and qualities of an object, which lie most upon the surface, are those which strike us first; and, by holding the object to our minds in deep and earnest contemplation, we find our knowledge in respect to it gradually increasing, till perhaps it embraces everything that lies within the legitimate range of our faculties. And why is not this the order that nature suggests in the delineation of human character? When an individual rises before us, what first occupies our attention is the outer man, the form, the features, the expression, the voice, the movement, everything that is open

and palpable to the senses. When we listen to what he says, or read what he writes, we advance a step further, and are brought in contact with the intellectual and moral man ; and here opens a field of observation through which we may range almost indefinitely. We may see how the original elements of character are moulded under the influence of various circumstances, and in connection with different relations ; and thus, while we reach the facts of the individual's history, we reach, what certainly is not less important, the influence they have exerted in the development of his faculties and the formation of his character. We propose to construct the present biographical sketch upon the principle here referred to, and accordingly begin with a brief notice of the *physical character* of its subject.

DR. DWIGHT'S external appearance was such, that a stranger could not have failed to mark him in the crowd. His form was stately and majestic, and every way well proportioned. His features were regular ; his eye black and piercing, yet benignant ; and his countenance altogether indicative of a high order of mind. His voice was rich and melodious, adapted alike to music and oratory. The *tout ensemble* of the external man, especially if he opened his lips, would induce the wish to gain some knowledge of his history.

He was born at Northampton, Massachusetts, May 14th, 1752, and was the son of Timothy and Mary Dwight. He possessed originally a fine constitution, which, in most respects, was preserved to him in its vigor till near the close of life. During his freshman year in college, he had the misfortune to break his arm ; and before the close of his collegiate course, in consequence of excessive application to study, his eyes became seriously affected, and a permanent weakness of sight was induced ; though this calamity was probably fastened upon him by prematurely resuming his studies, after having suffered from an attack of the small-pox. This ocular affection occasioned him not only great inconvenience, but often great pain, as long as he lived. It was a rare thing that he could ever occupy his eyes upon a book for fifteen minutes at a time ; and his suffering was sometimes so intense, that he would leave his bed in the middle of the night, and walk miles in the hope of gaining some relief.

He seemed to be advancing into a green old age, and had a fair prospect of a protracted period of activity, till he had reached the age of sixty-three. In September, 1815, during his autumnal vacation, he journeyed into the state of New York, and, after a few weeks, returned, in his accustomed health, having experienced as



much gratification, and given evidence of as much bodily and mental vigor, as in any preceding journey. Nor was there any apparent waning of his faculties till the ensuing February, when he was attacked by the disease which finally terminated his life. This disease was attended with protracted and excruciating pain, and for many weeks seemed, by a regular progress, to be approaching a fatal issue.

About the beginning of May, however, in consequence of a surgical operation, he gained some relief; and from that time his disease continued gradually to subside, till the early part of June, when, with some difficulty, he returned to his accustomed duties in the college. At the commencement of the succeeding term, he was extremely feeble, and there were some fresh indications that his life was drawing near to a close. He began to hear the recitations of his classes as usual, but was obliged to give up one part of his official duty after another, till his disease had finally got him completely under its power. During the last two or three days of his life, it seemed a conflict between great drowsiness and excruciating pain; and on Saturday morning, the 11th of January, 1817, he endured the last struggle, and sank into his rest.

The uncommon health, which Dr. Dwight en-

joyed during the greater part of his life, was no doubt to be attributed, in a great degree, to a habit of vigorous and systematic exercise. While he was a tutor in college, with a view to save time for study which must otherwise be given to exercise, he undertook the experiment of subsisting on the smallest possible quantity of food; and before he was yet aware of his danger, his constitution was well nigh undermined, and he was sinking under successive attacks of acute disease, induced by extraordinary abstinence. Happily, he relinquished the experiment before the recuperative energy of his constitution was gone; and, under the direction of a distinguished medical man, he commenced a regular course of exercise, both on foot and horseback, which, within a year, was the means of restoring him to his accustomed health.

The habit thus begun was never intermitted till the close of life. Besides walking more or less every day, he usually occupied two vacations of each year in journeying; and, as these journeys were always performed by moderate stages, they were not only directly tributary to health by the relaxation from severe labor and the agreeable bodily exercise they afforded, but indirectly also, by bringing him in contact with many of his friends, and furnishing scope for his wonderful talent at observation. But the kind

of exercise in which he seemed to delight most was the cultivation of his own garden. During several of his earlier years, he was occupied more or less upon a farm; and to the day of his death this kind of labor was never a weariness to him. He acted habitually in view of the connection between the health of the body and the vigor of the mind, and regarded it just as truly his duty to strengthen the muscles and sinews of the one, as to cultivate the nobler faculties of the other.

---

## CHAPTER II.

*His intellectual Character.—Ardent Love of Knowledge.—Varied Attainments.—His early and collegiate Education.*

NEXT to the physical comes the intellectual, the nobler part, to which the physical sustains the relation not only of a subordinate, but a servant. We shall here contemplate Dr. Dwight in the full maturity of his faculties and the vast extent and variety of his acquisitions, and then trace the history of that intellectual training that produced such noble results.

It will hardly be questioned, by any who have known him either personally or through his writings, that he possessed genius of a high order; but he was signally exempt from the eccentricity that is the frequent accompaniment of genius. We often see minds shooting forth with astonishing, even monstrous irregularity; one or two faculties marvellously developed, and kept in intense exercise, while others are left to rust out in a state of indolent repose. Whether this be owing to an original diversity in respect to the strength of different faculties, or to the want of a proper balance among them, or to the disproportionate culture which they respectively receive, it certainly is to be regarded as an intellectual calamity, as damping the hope and diminishing the power of the highest usefulness. It is not the man, who bestows the whole labor of his life upon a solitary faculty, that may be expected to do most and best, but he who renders due homage to his whole intellectual nature, keeping every faculty bright by exercise, and always ready to perform its appropriate work.

A nobler example of a well-balanced mind is not to be found, perhaps, than Washington. Without any of that startling splendor, which is usually considered as the very light in which genius lives and moves, his faculties were all



brought into an admirable harmony, and for this reason operated with such sure and powerful effect. Dr. Dwight, with far more of the imaginative and brilliant than belonged to the father of his country, possessed the same well-proportioned intellectual character for which he was distinguished. Not that there was no inequality among the powers of his mind; this could hardly be, in consistency with the present state of human imperfection; but there was not only no faculty in which he was deficient, but none in which we may not claim for him decided superiority. His mind was a complete piece of symmetry from the Creator's hand, and the cultivation which he bestowed upon it always had respect to the preservation of its original proportions.

Having said thus much of the general structure of his mind, it may not be amiss to descend a little to some of the particular powers in which lay the elements of his greatness; and here what strikes us most impressively is the remarkable union of the solid and versatile, the imagination and the reasoning faculty. It rarely happens that we find an individual of a very strong imagination, whose mind knows how to move except upon wings, or is at home in any other element than the upper regions; and, on the other hand, it is equally uncommon to find one



who delights in the abstruse and the profound, who is not, from original constitution, or taste, or habit, a fixed resident in the regions of abstraction.

But it was quite otherwise with Dr. Dwight. Though the provinces of fancy and of reasoning were with him perfectly distinct, yet so much was he at home in each, that he could pass from the one to the other with the most graceful facility. Such were his imaginative powers, that one magical glance of his mind would call up an assemblage of bright images, that would make his subject radiant with glory; and such were his powers of argumentation and abstraction, that the very next moment he could bring out a strong and popular argument, or descend into the deep places of metaphysics. If there were any difference in the measure in which he possessed these two intellectual qualities, perhaps it must be admitted that the bold, the lofty, the imaginative, could claim the superiority.

He possessed an uncommonly retentive and ready memory. Whatever he might have been in this respect originally, there can be no doubt that his memory was greatly improved by culture, and especially by a habit, which he formed in early life, of the strictest intellectual method. Whatever subject occupied his thoughts, he accustomed himself to think methodically; what-

ever new facts he might gain, were not only treasured up in his mind, but were arranged and laid away with admirable skill and care; and hence his mind became a vast storehouse, consisting of various well-ordered apartments, where there was a place for every thing, and every thing found its place. The effect of this was, that his knowledge was always at command. Whatever he had known once he knew always; and if he had occasion to use the thoughts which had lain dormant in his mind for years, he could awaken and appropriate them as readily as a methodical artificer could lay his hand upon the implements of his trade. Herein, to a great extent, lay the secret of the wonderful command which he possessed over his own faculties. Not only were they all kept in a healthful state, by being kept in vigorous exercise, but the materials upon which they were to work were always at hand, and always ready for immediate use.

It may be justly inferred from the statements already made, that Dr. Dwight's mind was characterized by great versatility. Possessing, as he did, the various faculties in much more than ordinary strength, he was capable of giving his mind whatever direction he would without the least apparent effort. Though it operated with great power, it operated also with great ease;

it was a giant moving irresistibly, yet gracefully, over his chosen field ; not a mind of ordinary stature, pausing and struggling, and finding at last that it must yield in unequal conflict. And with this ability to excel in any department of human knowledge, he combined, in an unusual degree, the habit of observation. No matter in what circumstances he might be placed, or by what company surrounded ; his eyes and ears were always open, and his reflective faculties always awake.

No object in nature was so minute, or so unimportant, but that it had attractions for his curious and scrutinizing eye. The pebble by the road-side, the flower blossoming in his path, the sheep bleating upon the hills, attracted his attention, and brought his mind into exercise, as truly as the high concerns of the nation, or the yet higher concerns of God's universal kingdom. And as there was no object of knowledge that he regarded as beneath him, so there was no source of knowledge so insignificant, but that he gladly availed himself of it. If he listened to the statesman, the military man, the man of science, to learn from each whatever he might be able to impart within the compass of his appropriate field, he was equally ready to heed the teachings of the gardener, or the farmer, or the sailor, or of any human being who could

render even the humblest contribution to his stock of knowledge.

His acquirements were such as might have been expected from his uncommonly versatile powers, united with the habit of constant and accurate observation. There was scarcely a department of human knowledge in which he was not quite at home. To say nothing here of his favorite branch, theology, he seemed almost as familiar with the whole field of literature and science as if he had been professionally devoted to the cultivation of each particular part of it. With the learned languages, he had probably, owing to the weakness of his sight, less to do than with almost any other branch connected with a liberal education; and yet he was enthusiastically devoted to them in his younger years, and retained his relish for them to the close of life.

The mathematics he pursued to a great extent, mastering the *Principia* with comparatively little effort, and willing apparently to make his dwelling-place for life in the region of lines and angles. The physical sciences had great attractions for him, particularly by reason of their bearings on the subject of natural religion; and he marked every new discovery with an almost enthusiastic interest. With geography and topography he was surprisingly familiar;



there was scarcely a spot in the wide world whose relative position he could not instantly define, and scarcely a city or town, of any importance, of which he could not give some account.

In intellectual and moral philosophy, all that relates to the constitution, the relations, and the obligations of man, he was profoundly versed; this rendered him an admirable casuist; he had great principles always at hand, by which to solve every problem in morals that was referred to him. He delighted much in rhetoric and its kindred branches; every thing connected with the history and philosophy of language, or with the formation of the writer and the orator; and his knowledge of these subjects was proportioned to the interest which he took in them. Music he cultivated not only as an art, but a science, and in his earlier years actually composed several pieces of no small merit. Even penmanship, poor, neglected penmanship, which in these days is understood to indicate genius not by its beauty, but by its illegibility, was by no means beneath his regard. There are specimens of his chirography still extant, which it is not easy to distinguish from the finest copperplate engraving. As nothing was too minute or insignificant for him to observe, so every thing that he observed became with him a matter of reflection; and he



never seemed satisfied till he knew every thing concerning it, that was to be known.

Having thus taken a rapid glance at the intellectual powers and acquirements of Dr. Dwight, it seems necessary, in order to complete the view of this part of his character, to contemplate the process by which these powers were developed, these acquirements made; in other words, to present a sketch of his intellectual training.

It is a circumstance too often lost sight of in the estimate we form of human character, that much of the good or evil that pertains to it, results from circumstances over which we have originally no control; especially circumstances connected with our birth and earliest training. This remark is strikingly illustrated in the subject of this memoir. His father was a man of sound and vigorous intellect; and his mother, the daughter of the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, inherited no small share of her father's intellectual greatness. Here was a pledge, that no effort would be wanting (especially as the mental vigor of the parents was united with the best moral qualities) to unfold and mature the faculties of the son, to say nothing of the fact that this was one of the instances, which we sometimes witness of the hereditary descent of genius.

While the character itself of the parents created an intellectual domestic atmosphere, which

was highly favorable to the development of the youthful faculties, their standing in society, in connection with their uncommon hospitality, attracted to their dwelling many persons of cultivated minds; so that their son, from the first budding of intellect, was surrounded by influences most favorable to intellectual culture. Of these influences, happily, he had the disposition to avail himself; and the rapid growth of his powers resembled the shooting forth of a beautiful flower, under the genial influence of a summer's sun.

His mental precocity was indicated the moment his mind had unfolded itself so far as to be brought in contact with the objects of human knowledge. He is said to have learned the alphabet, under the teaching of his mother, at a single lesson, and at the age of four could read fluently in the Bible. When he was about six, he commenced the study of Latin, contrary to his father's will and without his knowledge, for, while the father could not be convinced that such a study, at such an age, would not be premature, the son's mind was so intensely fixed upon it, that he contrived to have his own way, even at the expense of an evasion of parental authority. About this time, he became a member of the grammar school at Northampton; but this school was discontinued. At the age of twelve,

he was sent to Middletown to prosecute his studies, under the direction of the Reverend Enoch Huntington. Here he studied the classics with great avidity and success; and when he entered college, in 1765, having just passed his thirteenth year, he was familiar not only with the required classical authors, but with most of those that were read during the first half of the collegiate course.

His freshman and sophomore years in college, owing to a variety of circumstances, seem to have been, intellectually, perhaps the least profitable years of his life. He found himself, as every youth does, on entering college, surrounded by temptations to a careless and indolent habit; and what gave to these temptations additional power in the case of young Dwight, was the fact that his very thorough preparation for college left him with time for profitless intercourse, which those of more limited acquirements could not afford. The commencement of his junior year marked a new era in his course. He girded up the loins of his mind for renewed and more vigorous effort, and from that period his faculties were never allowed even a temporary dispensation.

Besides making himself thoroughly acquainted with every thing in the prescribed course, he

devoted himself, with great intensity, to other collateral branches of study; and it was about this time, that he began more particularly to indulge his taste for music and poetry. Deeply sensible of his delinquency during the two preceding years, he resolved that he would make the best atonement for it he could by extraordinary subsequent diligence; and the consequence was, that, at the close of his college course, notwithstanding he was then a mere stripling, a little past seventeen, his attainments were reckoned inferior to those of none in his class, and the first honor was awarded to another only in consideration of his superior age.

From the period of his graduation, his intellectual habits and pursuits were so much identified with his professional engagements as a teacher of youth and a minister of the gospel, that it would be premature to dwell upon them here, out of their appropriate connection. There was, however, one source of intellectual improvement and enjoyment, which was continued to him through life, and which it may not be improper here to notice, his constant intercourse with men of superior minds, in connection with the peculiarity of the period in which his lot was cast. His intimate associates in college were several of them subsequently among the first men of



their day, and have had a primary influence in moulding the institutions and character of the country. And as he advanced in years, and usefulness, and reputation, the circle of his acquaintance constantly extended, till it included a large proportion of the brightest minds of which America could boast ; to say nothing of many whom he had seen, and whom he had not seen, belonging to the other side of the Atlantic.

And then there was the peculiarity of the circumstances in which his intellectual habits were formed. It was not at a time of general repose, when there were no great questions agitating the world, no extraneous causes operating to waken the mind into bold and vigorous exercise ; on the contrary, it was at a period when, in respect to our own country in particular, there were mighty movements making, and mighty issues at stake ; when a storm of seven years swept over the land, which made the very fabric of society rock. Those were days in which dwarfs easily swelled into common men, and common men rose to giants, and natural giants towered into the clouds. Thought then moved like lightning, and one great mind would brighten up a thousand, and the mind that could sleep was reckoned as dead.



And, even after the revolution, great intellectual struggles were required for the establishment of our institutions, the attainment of the ultimate ends which the revolution had contemplated. The whole atmosphere of the country, owing to these circumstances, was impregnated with an intellectual energy which gave a distinctive character to the period, and in which many minds were trained, and reared, which we identify with our country's highest glory. Dr. Dwight, not only in the opening, but the maturing of his faculties, had the benefit of this quickening, brightening influence; and though, under less urgent and critical circumstances, he might have been a remarkable man, it is hardly to be supposed that he would have been what he was, if the earlier part of his life had been passed in a state of public quietude.

It should be borne in mind, in estimating Dr. Dwight as an intellectual man, that, during much the greater part of his life, one of the most important avenues of knowledge was, in respect to him, in a great measure closed. A large part of what he learned from books came to him through the medium, not of the eye, but of the ear. But, notwithstanding he prosecuted most of his labors under this serious disadvan-

tage, yet, through diligent and systematic application, his intellect was always expanding, and his stock of knowledge always increasing, to the day of his death.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### *His moral and religious Character.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the intellectual faculties may be regarded as having the precedence of the moral in the order of nature, inasmuch as all moral exercises presuppose intellectual perceptions, yet we can never estimate the character of the man without viewing the two parts of his nature in actual combination. Genius possesses a blasting or a quickening power; it rises into an angel, or sinks into a fiend, according to the moral influence by which it is directed. We have seen that the subject of this memoir had uncommon intellectual endowments and acquirements; and we shall see, as we advance, that he was no less distinguished for his moral and Christian character.

It has been remarked, that men of vigorous minds usually have proportionally strong feel-

ings, however much their feelings may be concealed by a habit of self-discipline. It was only necessary to see Dr. Dwight, to perceive that he had an ardent temperament. His countenance easily lighted up with deep and strong emotion, and whatever his hand found to do, he always did with his might. No matter whether he was in his garden, or in the pulpit; whether engaged in cheerful conversation with his friends, or discussing some abstruse question in metaphysics; it was manifest that the energy of his spirit was always awake; and even if the occasion required no great earnestness, there was that in his manner which told of a hidden fire that could be made to glow in a moment. If we should suppose the same powers of intellect, which he possessed, to have been associated with a cold and sluggish temperament, we should look in vain for those high and noble impulses under which he frequently acted, and for the vast amount of good which he was enabled to perform.

It must be acknowledged, that an ardent temperament is no security against an undecided and vacillating character; and hence it often happens that we see the same individual moving, at different periods, in opposite directions, with the force of a whirlwind. But Dr. Dwight, with his ardor, united a high degree of firmness. His

opinions, on all important subjects, were the result of much reflection; and he held them with a tenacity corresponding to the care and labor with which they had been formed. If he sometimes manifested great confidence where others paused and doubted, so as even to incur the suspicion of obstinacy, it was in relation to those subjects which he had maturely examined, and which he imagined, at least, he saw in the light of irresistible conviction. Great firmness in an individual who observes superficially, and thinks little, is but another name for prejudice and bigotry; but where it is associated with a habit of profound reflection and diligent observation, it becomes one of the crowning attributes of a noble mind.

He was distinguished, also, by great conscientiousness. His love of truth and right was so conspicuous, that probably no one, who knew him well, ever doubted it. With the low moral standards of the world he had nothing to do; the Bible furnished the only standard which he acknowledged; and to this he endeavored uniformly and scrupulously to conform. It is often an occasion for remark, and for regret, that professors of Christianity, and even ministers of the gospel, though they may be, in the main, exemplary, yet exhibit some culpable delinquency in the minor parts of their conduct; thus mak-

ing it manifest that they forget how "exceeding broad" is the divine "commandment." Dr. Dwight lived habitually under the impression, that there is no part of one's moral conduct that is unimportant, or that may safely be referred to any other than the perfect standard; and in whatever circumstances he was called to act, his first aim was to take counsel of an enlightened conscience. And whenever he had settled in his own mind the matter of duty, he had settled, also, his course of action. Difficulties might embarrass; obstacles might oppose; but what were difficulties and obstacles to a mind that was sustained in every movement by a consciousness of its own rectitude, a mind that feared not to invoke the scrutiny of the Omniscient Eye? He always cherished the most delicate respect for the opinions and feelings of his friends; but, whenever they came in conflict with his honest convictions, his maxim was to obey God rather than man.

Dr. Dwight was a fine example of Christian benevolence. The generous spirit, which he received from his Creator, became, under the purifying and elevating influence of Christianity, one of the noblest elements of his character. This spirit exhibited itself wherever human suffering was to be relieved, or human want to be supplied. We barely advert here to the principle



of benevolence as a component part of his moral and Christian character ; the operations of this principle may more fitly come under review in a subsequent chapter of this memoir.

For scarcely anything was he more distinguished, than his reverence for the Scriptures. Regarding them with the fullest confidence as a divine revelation, he recognized the finger of God, the voice of God, in all the doctrines, and precepts, and facts, which they record ; and though he always maintained that Reason had an important office to perform in ascertaining their divine authority and their legitimate meaning, yet, when she had reached this point, he held that she was to be subject to Faith ; in other words, that, when she had decided that God had spoken, and what he had spoken, she was to receive his testimony without gainsaying. With these views of the Bible, he studied it with the most earnest attention, and endeavored not only to keep his mind open to the truths which it inculcates, but his heart open to the spirit which it breathes. And as he regarded the Bible with the utmost reverence, so also he regarded everything that bears the impress of divine authority, the Sabbath, the house of God, everything connected with the ordinances and institutions of religion. Those who have seen him enter the sanctuary will never forget, how everything in

his aspect and manner indicated that there was a deep solemnity resting on his spirit, worthy to be felt by one who was standing in the gate of heaven.

It was impossible that a character should combine the several moral qualities already noticed, without being also distinguished for its consistency; and accordingly we find that in this trait Dr. Dwight was preëminent. He was as far from moral eccentricity as intellectual; and was as careful to preserve harmony among the one set of faculties as the other. His religion did not consist exclusively in faith or in works; but while he maintained the absolute necessity of faith, as supplying the principle of Christian obedience, not less than its motives, he contended, with great earnestness, that "faith without works is dead;" and this union of faith and works, of principle and practice, always appeared in his own character. It has been one of the great defects, in Christian character, in these latter years, that one grace has been cultivated at the expense of another; zeal and activity have not unfrequently trampled upon humility, and meekness, and charity; and the very graces that have been thus disproportionately magnified, have been magnified out of all their loveliness into positive deformity; and, as the necessary result, Christianity has had but an imperfect and unseemly embodi-

ment in the lives of its votaries. Dr. Dwight's example was a standing rebuke to all such irregular, we had almost said monstrous, developments of the religious principle.

He was zealous ; but his zeal was tempered with prudence. He was devout ; but there was no semblance of ostentation in his devotions. He put forth vigorous efforts in every good cause ; but he did it with a deep sense of his dependence on divine aid. He was unyielding in his opposition to all moral evil ; but the subject of it he followed with kindness, never visited with maledictions. He felt deeply his unworthiness before his Maker ; but he eschewed everything like artificial sanctity. In a word, his moral and religious character was a beautiful assemblage of whatsoever is true, and honorable, and pure, and lovely, and of good report ; resembling, not the wild shooting of a meteor, or a shower of meteors, but the calm and steady shining of the sun.

But, notwithstanding the high degree of moral excellence which we have attributed, and, we are sure, justly attributed, to him, no one will claim for him, least of all would he have claimed for himself, the absence of moral imperfection and infirmity. He was, no doubt, naturally of an aspiring disposition, fond of exercising influence over his fellow-men ; and in the sermon, which

he preached immediately upon his recovery from the first violent attack of the illness that terminated his life, and in which he details at length his views while he supposed himself lying on his death-bed, he adverts particularly to the fact, that he had had too keen a relish for human applause; a relish altogether disproportioned to the value of the object as it appeared to him in the twilight of life. But, while he certainly had faults, in common with every descendant of Adam, it is a rare case that we find an individual who has so few; and even some of those original tendencies, which, under certain influences, might have brought his whole moral character into the greatest jeopardy, were actually rendered tributary, by the guiding and forming hand of Christianity, to the lofty moral elevation which he attained. Had his character been formed under those influences which prevailed in France, at the time of the revolution, and for a long time previous, instead of being, as he was, one of the noblest examples of virtue and usefulness to be found in an age, he might have been a master-spirit in the wildest moral tempest that ever swept over the world.

The general system of doctrine, under which Dr. Dwight's religious character was formed, was substantially the same with that which was held by the reformers, and which has since pre-

ailed to a great extent throughout Protestant Christendom. With some slight variations, it was the same of which his illustrious grandfather, the elder Edwards, was one of the ablest expounders and defenders in his own or any other age. He viewed Christianity as essentially a remedial system; which contemplates man in a state of moral estrangement from his Maker, and makes provision to restore him to the divine favor, through the mediation of Jesus Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit. This view of the gospel he held with great tenacity; in it he regarded the power of Christianity as essentially lodged; and from it he gathered the strongest motives for humility, gratitude, and obedience.

In estimating the moral and religious character of this venerable man, it is necessary, as it was in the development of his intellect, to have respect to the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed during the critical and forming period. These circumstances were, to some extent, of a conflicting character; partly favorable and partly unfavorable to the sound and healthful growth of the moral man. On the one hand, the influence that emanated from his domestic relations, from everything that entered into the idea of home, was most benign and salutary. His parents were not only exemplary professors of Christianity, and therefore disposed to train



up their son in the ways of virtue and piety, but his mother, especially, possessed an intellect of the highest order, which had been consecrated from her youth to an uninterrupted and earnest course of well-doing. Of course the intellectual and religious atmosphere, that pervaded their dwelling, was exceedingly propitious to the best moral training.

But, then, on the other hand, the period of his youth was passed at a time of great public degeneracy. The desolating moral effects of the French war were manifest in the low state of religion and morals throughout the country. It was the beginning of an era of infidelity, which was prolonged through the influence not only of our own revolution, but subsequently of the revolution in France, till near the close of the last century. An inquisitive mind, like that of young Dwight, could hardly fail to be assailed by the cavils of skepticism ; and had it not been for the antidote against their power, that was supplied by an early parental influence, who can say but that his moral and religious principles might have suffered a complete wreck, while they were yet only in the process of formation?

At the time of commencing his college course, he seems to have had only so much religious principle and feeling as resulted from the general influence of an early Christian education ;

and accordingly he found in the temptations of college life an ordeal which he but ill knew how to endure. And what gave to these temptations, in his case, the greater power, was, that his more than ample preparation for college left him with too much leisure ; a circumstance which is almost sure to beget a habit either of indolence or vice. That this effect was realized in some measure upon himself, there can be no doubt. He had begun to venture within the circle of temptation, and to contemplate vice in some of its more splendid and alluring forms ; and there was a time when it might have seemed doubtful, whether ruin or glory was in his path ; but happily he was brought to reflection before his principles were undermined or his practice had become immoral.

His tutor, Stephen Mix Mitchell, who was afterwards a distinguished civilian, and whose public services have given him a name among the eminent benefactors of his country, perceiving indications of waywardness in his young and promising pupil, took occasion to express to him his apprehensions in regard to his course, and to urge him, by the most serious and weighty considerations, to beware of the temptations by which he was surrounded. And the faithful tutor and friend had the gratification to perceive, that his labor of love was not in vain. Not

only was it received with expressions of gratitude and good-will, but it took effect in an immediate and vigorous resolution to resist the beginnings of evil, and to be governed henceforth in all things by the dictates of an enlightened conscience. Dr. Dwight was accustomed always to consider this as an era in his life, and to regard his excellent friend as the instrument of saving him from threatened ruin. From this period, he seems ever to have stood forth the inflexible friend of virtue, the uncompromising enemy of vice.

It was during the period of his tutorship in college, when he was not far from twenty years of age, that he seems to have been first brought effectually and permanently under the power of religion ; and about this time he made a public profession of his faith, and was admitted to the communion of the church in Yale College. From this time to the close of life, in the various stations which he occupied, and amidst all the temptations to which he was exposed, not a cloud ever rested for an hour upon his Christian character. It was manifest to every observer of his conduct, that he acted habitually under the influence of "the powers of the world to come ;" and that, whatever might be his occupation, his heart was upon "the things that are not seen, and are eternal." In his intercourse with the

world, he preserved the golden mean between levity on the one hand, and a gloomy and sanctimonious manner on the other ; and was serious or cheerful according to the circumstances in which he was placed. It may be said, however, on the whole, that one of the primary attractions of his Christian character was his winning cheerfulness. In seasons of public calamity, as well as of domestic affliction and personal suffering, his spirit always sustained itself in a filial reliance on the power, and wisdom, and goodness of God. His courage never failed, his tranquillity never forsook him, because he knew *who*

“Rides on the whirlwind and directs the storm.”

There are few individuals who pass through the world in the enjoyment of so much public favor as did Dr. Dwight ; and every Christian, who has had experience, knows that such a state of things is little adapted to aid the culture of religious affections. But, notwithstanding the besetting infirmity of his nature probably lay in this direction ; and though, as has been already intimated, and as he himself humbly acknowledged, he did not always rise above this unhallowed influence ; yet there is no doubt, that, on the whole, his Christian character was constantly maturing with his advancing years ; and it never shone forth with such radiant attractions



as during the last year or two of his life, while he was struggling with the power of disease, and anticipating the speedy termination of his course.

There is always a curiosity to know how a great and good man dies. No doubt there is often an undue importance attached to this inquiry; for the last exercises of the spirit on earth may be modified by a variety of accidental circumstances, so as to be a very imperfect index to the true character; and hence it is quite possible that a bad man may appear to have a glorious path into the next world, while another, of whom the world is not worthy, may seem to die under a cloud. No man was more sensible of the fallibility of this test of religious character than Dr. Dwight; he gave proof of it in the most unexceptionable of all circumstances; for when he was asked by a friend, a short time before his death, concerning his views in the prospect of eternity, his reply was, "Do not ask a dying man; look at the life."

But, notwithstanding the character is certainly to be judged by the life rather than the death, we naturally linger about the death-bed of a good man, to gather from the last exercises of his spirit the crowning evidence of his goodness. We love to see the sun, which has enlightened and cheered us in his progress, sink gloriously beneath the horizon; and even after he is gone,



we gaze with pleasure on the surrounding sky, still glowing under the influence of his lingering beams. There was everything in Dr. Dwight's last days and hours, that became the spirituality, the cheerfulness, the dignity of the Christian. During the many months that his health was declining, and that he must have been aware that he was relaxing his hold upon life, his mind uniformly retained its wonted cheerfulness, and he was constantly employed, according to the measure of physical ability that remained to him, in the discharge of his accustomed duties. In the intervals of comparative freedom from suffering, and even while he was enduring severe pain, he dictated to his amanuensis, both in prose and in verse, in a manner worthy of his brightest days; and his interest in everything that related to the general progress of religion, and the welfare of his fellow-men, continued unabated to the last.

His preparation for death was not like the putting on of a garment for an occasion; it was the result of a long and diligent course of self-discipline and fidelity in the service of his Master, by which his Christian graces had reached a glorious maturity. Everything connected with his closing scene was simple and natural; no eccentricity, no extravagance, nor yet any of that intense rapture, which sometimes glows in the

last expressions of the departing spirit. Nevertheless there was majesty impressed upon it all ; everything was sublimely appropriate to the circumstances in which he was placed. His confidence in the promises of the gospel, and of his interest in those promises, never wavered nor faltered. His sense of the goodness and mercy of God was never stronger, than while he was enduring the throes under which his earthly tabernacle fell. So long as his lips could move, they moved in obedience to the spirit of resignation and devotion ; and when, at last, his majestic form lay low and lifeless, every one felt that his yet more majestic spirit had had a safe and glorious transition to a brighter world. If it were given to a good man to choose how he should die, perhaps he could not imagine a death-scene in every respect more desirable.

---

#### CHAPTER IV.

*His social and domestic Character. — Anecdotes illustrative of his social Qualities and Habits.*

So intimate is the connection between the intellectual and moral and the social, that, when we have ascertained what an individual is, in

respect to the former, we have no small part of the evidence before us by which we may judge of him in respect to the latter. But, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that the social principle acts powerfully on the intellect and the affections, and that the diversity, which characterizes its development in different individuals, occasions, in no small degree, the various forms of character, and the various degrees of usefulness, that we see among men. It is quite possible that one may be gifted with fine original powers, and those powers brought under the highest degree of culture, and associated with some noble moral qualities, and yet, from a neglect to cultivate the social principle, he may live to comparatively little purpose. He may shut himself up in his chamber or study, and pass years of glorious contemplation, never coming into the world, except at the demand of imperious necessity. He might have a hand upon many of the springs of public action; he might mould, in no small degree, the destinies of his country; he might impart knowledge to the ignorant, and consolation to the sorrowful, and strength to the weary, if he would only come forth and put his mind in communion with other minds.

But no; he chooses to be a solitary being, to move, if he moves at all, where the eye of man shall not see him. He does not take the trouble

even to record and send into the world his own bright thoughts. The claims, which society makes upon him, he steadily and sternly resists; and his death, though it may really mark the departure of a great mind, and may be an event of infinite importance to himself, yet leaves no perceptible chasm in any of the departments of society. It is manifest, then, that there can be no adequate view of the character of an individual, that does not include an estimate of his social qualities, of everything that enters into his qualifications for actual and successful contact with the world.

The social principle, as an original element of Dr. Dwight's constitution, was uncommonly strong. From his earliest childhood, he manifested a decided relish for intercourse with those around him; and this propensity grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength. This, it must be acknowledged, is not always a blessing; for, where it is ill directed, and has nothing better than ignorance to feed upon, it becomes at best a tedious, not to say disgusting, garrulity. But, with the high intellectual powers and moral qualities possessed by Dr. Dwight, it is hardly necessary to say, that it was a source of constant gratification and improvement to all with whom he associated. Even the best talkers generally chose to be listeners when they were



in his company, except so far as was necessary to give his remarks such a direction as was most agreeable to them.

One secret of his remarkable social power lay in the fact, that he could accommodate himself with perfect felicity to every variety of company into which he might happen to fall. This resulted from the wonderfully diversified character of his acquisitions, from the admirable arrangement that prevailed in his mind, and from the complete command which he had acquired over all his faculties. There are some men, who can converse with great fluency and power on some favorite topic, to which they are specially devoted, but who have very little to say about anything else, and who seem to look down upon many of the humbler departments of human knowledge, as unworthy of their regard. But as Dr. Dwight's inquisitive mind was inclined to range through the whole field of truth, so far as it can be embraced by the human faculties; as he regarded nothing insignificant that pertained either to the works of God or to the obligations or interests of man; so he was as truly at home with the farmer as with the philosopher; in constructing a well, or planning a house, or analyzing a flower, as in discussing great questions connected with the interests of the church or the state.

This allusion to the well is in point; for we



remember to have heard from an individual, who lived in his family when he was quite a young man, that several workmen, who were engaged in sinking a well, had encountered some difficulty, which they knew not how to surmount; and a suggestion from him effectually relieved them, so that they were able at once to proceed in their work. On another occasion, he was riding by the frame of a house, which was just in the act of being raised, when he observed some defect in it which had escaped the observation of the architect himself, and, by giving them timely notice from the street, prevented a crash of the frame, which would probably have been fatal to the lives of several persons. As he was travelling in Vermont, in company with a friend, he stopped at an inn to pass the night. In the course of the evening, a gentlemanly-looking stranger approached him, and, without suspecting who he was, volunteered some very illiberal remarks concerning the character and influence of our colleges. The doctor, having heard his remarks, instantly replied to them with great adroitness and eloquence, and, withal, with the utmost respect, insomuch that the lips of the stranger were closed, and his admiration not less than his amazement awakened. When Dr. Dwight had retired, the stranger eagerly inquired of his travelling companion, who the gentleman was

with whom he had been conversing. The answer was, that it was "President Dwight of Yale College." The mortification, which this unexpected information induced, was extreme; and he met him the next morning with a most respectful and ample apology.

- At another time, during one of his journeys, he made a short visit to a relative, in an obscure village in the interior of New England. His arrival was an era in the history of the place; and most of the neighbors and friends of the family were invited in to pass the evening with their distinguished guest. Nearly all the gentlemen present were engaged in agricultural pursuits, and though President Dwight talked upon many subjects, and talked eloquently of course, yet a large portion of his remarks related to the business of farming; a subject upon which he showed himself just as much at home, as if he had been professionally devoted to it. The company were all exceedingly struck with his fine powers, and extensive information, and affable and obliging manners; but said one of the ladies, in speaking of his conversation afterwards, "*I was disappointed, that he spent at least half the evening in talking to my husband, and the other gentlemen, about the cultivation of potatoes and the raising of sheep.*" The truth was, he knew what subject interested them most; and he was

no less willing than competent to direct the conversation in a channel accordant alike with their tastes and occupations.

Dr. Dwight was an admirable specimen of genuine politeness. His manners were the simple and graceful acting out of a benevolent and noble spirit. He had refinement and polish, without an air of stiffness or affectation. With his intimate friends he is said to have enjoyed great freedom of intercourse; but there was that about him, which would always repel an undignified familiarity. His fine person, his graceful movements, every thing connected with his general bearing in the world, were fitted eminently to qualify him for social life. His appreciation of the just and fitting, in the intercourse of society, marked every thing that he did in every situation in which he was placed. A circumstance strikingly illustrative of this occurred in connection with the closing scene of his life. A few hours before his departure, some ladies of his intimate acquaintance called to proffer their sympathy and assistance; and when, on entering his chamber, the family, from being overwhelmed with grief, failed to exhibit their usual courtesy, he, with some effort, slightly raised his head from the pillow, and inquired particularly in respect to their own health and the health of their families. He then begged them

to be seated, and, turning to one of his children, said, "You will hand chairs." It was the instinctive prompting of that inwrought sense of propriety, that had constituted, through life, a leading element both of his popularity and usefulness.

Nor was this a mere matter of accident, or of original constitution, with him, but of culture and of principle. And, by the way, unless we greatly mistake, this is a subject deserving of far more attention than it receives, especially in our own country. It is not a thing to be disguised, that, while in the cultivation of the intellect, and of the affections, we are not, perhaps, as a nation, behind any other, yet, in respect to manners, all that belongs to the personal habits of an individual in his intercourse with society, we stand greatly in need of improvement. It is in vain to say that the manners are of no importance, if the mind and the heart are right; for the manners constitute, in a great degree, the medium through which the mind and the heart exercise their influence over other minds and hearts. The common impression is, that the man is seen in his manners, and the world are prone to act upon it; and yet this impression often leads to a wrong estimate of character; and it not unfrequently happens that the finest intellectual powers, and moral qualities, pass for much less than they are worth, by



reason of the awkward, and, perhaps, offensive manner with which they are associated; while, on the other hand, the man of moderate endowments commands a large share of public favor, and exerts an extensive influence on society, chiefly because every thing that he says and does is associated with the charm of an attractive manner.

This remark might be illustrated by a reference to all the different professions. There are strong men in obscure places, and moderate men in high places, merely because the former, with their intellectual vigor, have grown up into clowns, and the latter, with their intellectual mediocrity, have grown up into gentlemen. There is no doubt that this is a matter that has an important bearing even upon our national character; and as the manners usually receive their permanent stamp in early life, it devolves upon parents to look to this part of the education of their children, as well as to the formation of their intellectual powers and moral feelings. Dr. Dwight was always deeply impressed with the importance of this subject; and his precepts in respect to this, as well as other things, often enforced the views which his example beautifully illustrated.

It will be readily perceived, after this general view of his social character, that he must have



been a model of all that was attractive and endearing, in the more private and tender relations of life. The son, the husband, the father, the friend, he exemplified in all that was graceful, and affectionate, and devoted. No one could have honored, more than he did, the filial relation. His mother, who died but a few years before himself, was always the object of his most respectful and beneficent regards; and while any thing that could contribute to her comfort, within the range of his ability, was not done, he was never at rest. In his own immediate family, while he always maintained the dignity and authority appropriate to his place, he was amiable and gentle, and not unfrequently playful, in his intercourse. While he was courteous and obliging to all, his intimate friends alone felt the full warmth and strength of his affections. Several of his earlier friends, especially, he cherished with the fondness of a brother, and, as most of them passed away before him, he felt deeply the disruption of the tie, and anticipated with joy the meeting in heaven.

In the year 1777, he was married to Mary Woolsey, daughter of Benjamin Woolsey, of Long Island. She still lives, at the advanced age of about ninety. They had eight children, all of them sons, several of whom have occupied, or still occupy, important spheres of pub-

lic usefulness. Of his youngest son, Henry, it is not indelicate now to speak; for he has long since gone to his grave. I knew him as a classmate, and loved him as a friend; and rarely has been known a more generous and noble spirit. He had an exuberance of good-nature, which, in college, made him the favorite of all; while yet, by making him the centre of too many social circles, it operated unfavorably to his scholarship, especially in those departments which required intense application. After he was graduated, however, a wonderful and most desirable change passed over him. The gayety of preceding years subsided into a dignified, Christian cheerfulness; his warm affections were awakened into exercise under the influence of religious truth; and the great principles of the gospel became the controlling principles of his life. At the same time, his intellectual faculties burst forth with a freshness and splendor that astonished all who had previously known him; and henceforth his progress in the various branches of knowledge, to which he devoted himself, was almost incredibly rapid. He subsequently visited the continent of Europe, and passed a considerable time in Germany, which he improved most diligently in cultivating his mind and enlarging the circle of his information. On his return to his native country, he published a

large volume, containing the result of his observations while he was abroad ; a volume which is valuable alike for its amount of information, for its fascinating style, and its just and philosophic views of many of the subjects which it embraces. Happening, several years after, to travel through a part of Germany where he had spent a portion of his time, I heard him spoken of as having been the favorite of all who had known him ; and one individual, particularly, who ranks among the first scholars of the day, expressed himself concerning both the head and the heart of my early friend in a manner that would have seemed to me extravagant, if my personal knowledge had not verified his statement. It was not long after he had completed his tour, and published his "Travels," before it became evident that he was the subject of a deep-seated disease. It proved a disease which medical skill could not arrest ; and, within a brief period, it had reached a fatal termination. He died under the sustaining influence of Christian faith ; and those who knew him, while they linger gratefully upon what he was, think of him as now making one of the community of the blessed.

Soon after Dr. Dwight reached his maturity, an occasion occurred in his family for the exercise of a filial and fraternal spirit, which he met in a manner that reflects the highest honor upon

his domestic character. In the summer of 1776, his father went, with two of his sons, into the south-western part of what is now the state of Mississippi, with a view to provide for them there a permanent settlement on a tract of land, which he and his brother-in-law, General Lyman, had received as a grant from the crown. In the midst of his efforts to accomplish this object, he died suddenly at Natchez, of the disease of the climate, at the close of the following year. Owing to the peculiarly unsettled state of the country, many months elapsed before the news of his death reached his family. Dr. Dwight was at this time employed as a chaplain in the army; but, as soon as he heard of his father's death, he instantly resigned his place, and brought his own small family to Northampton, the residence of his mother, where, as a son and a brother, he rendered the most exemplary attentions.

Here he continued for five years in charge of a numerous family, providing, in a great measure, for their daily wants, and conducting the education of his brothers and sisters in the most careful and skilful manner. It was truly a magnanimous spectacle to see a young man, gifted, as he was, with the finest powers, with a family of his own upon his hands, and with the strongest inducements to make a permanent set-



tlement for life, voluntarily and cheerfully deferring his own ultimate domestic arrangements, for the sake of acting as a guardian and a guide to the family of his deceased father. His venerable mother, it is said, could never speak of his filial devotion but with the strongest emotions; and we have more than once heard his only surviving sister, to whom he acted as a father, during her earlier years, advert to his self-sacrificing efforts in behalf of their bereaved family, in terms alike creditable to *his* generosity and *her* gratitude.

His position in society, to say nothing of the excellent qualities that secured it to him, was such as to render the circle of his acquaintance very extensive, and to bring him into relations more or less intimate with many of the first men of his time. His house, while president of the college, was the constant resort of strangers, not only from every part of our own country, but from abroad; and, while his hospitality secured to them a cordial welcome, his intelligence and affability were an unfailing source of gratification. Though his correspondence was extensive, yet, on account of the imperfection of his sight, it was conducted chiefly by an amanuensis; and hence there are comparatively few letters of his to be found written with his own hand. He had a few British correspondents,



among whom were several of the most distinguished theological writers of the day; but the number was, doubtless, much less than it would have been, but for the constant pressure of his engagements, and especially for the necessity of his writing with a borrowed hand. Such of his letters as have come under our eye are alike honorable to his head and his heart; they are, as they should be, the unstudied and graceful efforts of a superior mind, acting under the influence of a benevolent spirit.

---

## CHAPTER V.

*His Character as a Preacher. — Chaplain in the Army of the Revolution. — Settled over a Parish in Greenfield. — His theological Sentiments. — Method of Preaching in the College Chapel.*

IT was the intention of Dr. Dwight, when he became a communicant in the church, and for some time afterwards, to devote himself to the profession of law; and to this his studies were specially directed, during the latter part of the period of his tutorship. Had he persevered in

this intention, he would, no doubt, have been one of the great lights of the American bar; for his uncommon versatility and admirable self-command, in connection with his uncompromising regard to the dictates of conscience, eminently qualified him to shine in the legal profession. Upon more mature reflection, however, he changed his purpose, and determined to consecrate himself to the Christian ministry. The advantages of theological education were, at that time, compared with what they now are, extremely limited; and it was only necessary for a young man, after leaving college, to read theology for a few months under the general direction of some clergyman, while, perhaps, the greater part of his time was occupied in teaching a school, in order to gain a regular license to preach the gospel.

It is presumed that his immediate preparation for the ministry was conducted chiefly by himself; and he had, probably, bestowed so much attention on theology, as a matter of general improvement, previous to his determination to become a preacher, that he might safely venture, even on this ground, to engage in the duties of the clerical profession. He was licensed to preach, in June, 1777, by a committee of the Northern Association, in the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts. This was about three

months previous to his resigning his tutorship in college.

In September of this year, he received and accepted an appointment as chaplain to General Parsons's brigade, in the American army. Here, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty and responsibility, he exercised the ministerial office for about a year, till the domestic calamity, referred to in the preceding chapter, led him to resign his place, and go back to reside at Northampton. But, notwithstanding the primary object of his residence here was to take the direction of his mother's family, which seemed to him to have been providentially cast upon his care; and though, as a means of accomplishing this, he had more or less to do both with teaching and with farming; yet, during this whole period, he was almost constantly occupied, on the Sabbath, with the appropriate duties of the ministry. From 1778 to 1781, he supplied, successively, vacant congregations in Westfield, Muddy Brook, a parish of Deerfield, and South Hadley. In the winter of 1782, he was invited to the pastoral charge of the congregational churches in Beverly and Charlestown, Massachusetts; and though these invitations were accompanied by very flattering pecuniary offers, and, withal, came from some of the most re-

spectable churches in the commonwealth, he promptly declined them both.

About this time, he consented, in view of his peculiar circumstances, and the circumstances of the country, to engage, temporarily, in civil affairs; and he rendered some very important services to the state, in connection with the business of legislation; and many of his friends, among whom were some of the most distinguished civilians of the day, urged him to withdraw from the pulpit, and give himself, henceforth, entirely to civil pursuits; and these proposals were accompanied with assurances, that he should soon be advanced to a station of the highest legislative influence in the nation. This change of profession was warmly recommended to him by one individual, at least as eminent for his piety and benevolence, as for his civil rank; and when it is considered, that this was emphatically the forming period of our national character, and that institutions were then to be established, and modes of thinking and acting to be adopted, which must have a most decisive bearing on our future national weal or woe, it would not have been strange if his judgment and conscience had both decided in favor of the proposed change. But, so firmly was his mind fixed in favor of the profession

which he had actually chosen, that nothing could induce him, for a moment, to think of any other; and even while he was temporarily laboring, during the week, in another sphere, in obedience to what he regarded the high call of duty, his Sabbaths were chiefly occupied in preaching the gospel.

In May, 1783, he received a unanimous call from the church in Greenfield, a parish of Fairfield Connecticut, to become their minister. This call, after some deliberation, he determined to accept; and was, accordingly, set apart to the ministerial office in that place on the 5th of November following. Here he continued fulfilling the duties of a preacher and a pastor, with great acceptance, for the succeeding twelve years; at the end of which period he was removed to another and more important sphere of usefulness. Previous to this, however, in 1794, he received and declined an invitation to become the pastor of the Reformed Dutch Church in Albany.

His duties as a preacher were by no means diminished in consequence of his removal to the presidency of Yale College; on the contrary, they were rather increased; for, with the presidency, he also assumed the professorship of theology, in the appropriate duties of which was included preaching regularly in the college chap-



el, twice on the Sabbath. Besides, the change in the character of his audience now led him to elaborate his pulpit-efforts more than he had found necessary in the comparatively retired station, which he had previously occupied; for not only was he brought in contact, in his public ministrations, with the minds of intelligent and inquisitive young men, many of whom had been trained under skeptical influences, but he was thrown into one of the most intellectual circles in the land; and the college chapel was constantly resorted to on the Sabbath, not only by those around him who knew how to appreciate his fine powers, but by distinguished visitors from every part of the country.

Shortly after he entered on the duties of the presidency, he commenced the course of theological lectures, which finally grew into the "System of Theology," which is now known as one of the most enduring monuments of his fame. These lectures were originally delivered from short notes, while he was at Greenfield; though they were, subsequently, expanded into nearly double their original number. He delivered them twice in the same way in the college chapel; but, in 1805, the corporation having voted him a small addition to his salary, to enable him to employ an amanuensis, he commenced the labor of writing them out, and con-

tinued to write one a week till the course was completed. It was his custom to deliver one of these lectures on the morning of each Sabbath, and a sermon of a more general and practical character in the afternoon. In this way he supplied the pulpit of the chapel during the whole period of his presidency ; each class having an opportunity to listen to the whole course of his lectures, which was completed once in four years. It was a rare thing that he had a stranger in his pulpit, and still more rare that he relieved himself by an exchange of labors with a brother in the ministry.

It will not be questioned, by competent judges, that he was one of the ablest preachers of his time, or that his name stands among a very few of the brightest names that have adorned the American pulpit. But his reputation did not depend so much on any one striking excellence, towering greatly above the rest, as on a happy union of all the qualities requisite to form a preacher of the highest order ; not so much on an occasional effort of great power and splendor, borrowing its importance, in no small degree, from contrast with the ordinary efforts of the same mind, as on the habit of acquitting himself well on every occasion ; of doing ample justice to every subject that he might have in hand. We are not

at all disposed to question that some very eccentric preachers have been eminently useful; but, it is believed, their usefulness has generally been in spite of their eccentricity, not in consequence of it. Eccentricity may, indeed, be associated with genius of the brightest stamp; but it always supposes imperfection. It may make the world stare with amazement; but it were far better for the world to contemplate a well-balanced mind operating with simple and beautiful consistency. It may inscribe itself on the tablet of the world's memory, but it will scarcely make out its claim to the world's gratitude or veneration. Dr. Dwight was eccentric in nothing; least of all as a preacher. So happily were his various powers brought into operation in the pulpit, that it was impossible to say which appeared to the most advantage. There may have been other preachers, who could, occasionally, rise to a loftier height, and produce a more overwhelming impression, than he; but, if there have been those, at least in our own country, whose ministrations were uniformly marked with more vigor, and dignity, and attraction, than his, we know not where to look for them.

It was a prominent feature of his preaching, that it contemplated man in respect to all his faculties, all his relations, all the various circum-

stances in which he is placed. It happens to many of our clergymen, that they have their pulpit hobbies, which they ride continually, not less to the discomfort of their hearers, than to the detriment of their usefulness. One, for instance, has a metaphysical turn of mind; and he is forever delving away at abstruse questions, which have only a remote connection with religious truth; or, if he really deals out the sincere milk of the word, there is an air of abstraction in the manner of doing it, that deprives it, to a great extent, of its nutritive quality. Another, with a differently constituted mind, scouts the very idea of argument in the pulpit, and brings out of his treasure nothing else but varieties of the declamatory and hortatory; as if a sermon were to be estimated chiefly by the number of interjections which it contains, or the wear and tear of lungs consequent on its delivery. Another, with an unusual susceptibility of tender emotion, never feels as if he is accomplishing much good, unless he has before him a weeping audience; and he constructs all his sermons with reference to this end, and not unfrequently worries his people out, by the attempt to make them cry, and even chases the pathetic into the downright ridiculous.

And while these several classes of preachers err, from yielding unduly to their own constitu-

tional tendencies, there are others who are chargeable with equal delinquency, from yielding too much to the public taste, or to the peculiar circumstances in which they happen to be placed. There may be a diseased state of the public mind in respect to particular subjects; or there may be certain controversies, more or less important, claiming the public ear, or the public thought, with unusual urgency; in either of which cases, ministers are liable to let their sympathy with, or their opposition to, the surrounding state of things, carry them to extremes, at least lead them to overlook the greater in their regard for the less. Who needs be told that the pulpit, in our own day, instead of being kept sacred to the great purposes of truth, and goodness, and charity, has been not unfrequently diverted to the advocacy of some system of measures, to say the least, of doubtful tendency; and that its occupant, instead of standing forth in the high character of an expounder of God's revelation, has at best held no higher ground than that of a tither of mint, anise, and cumin?

Dr. Dwight kept at the greatest distance from these and all kindred mistakes, by which so many preachers effectually defeat the great end of the pulpit. The whole range of man's nature, the complete circle of man's duties, he kept always before him. He bore in mind, first of all, that



man is an intellectual being, and that the appropriate food of the intellect is truth; and hence his discourses were always enriched with impressive and weighty sentiment. However familiar might be his subject, he was sure to bring out something to edify the attentive listener. He often reasoned with great power; but his reasoning was almost always founded on plain Scripture and common sense, so as to be within the comprehension of any capacity; and in the few instances in which he departed from this rule, in connection with his system of theology, the subjects which he discussed so obviously lay within the range of metaphysical inquiry, that he could not avoid it. He occasionally addressed the imagination and the passions with vigor and effect. Sometimes he seemed to surround the mind of the hearer with almost endlessly diversified forms of beauty and grandeur, and hold him well nigh entranced at the gate of heaven. Sometimes, by analyzing the evil of sin, and especially by exhibiting it in its connection with the awful future, or by tracing the Savior's path of suffering to its termination on Calvary, he would leave impressions of solemnity, or awaken feelings of sympathy, or open fountains of penitential sorrow, which rarely have their parallel in the history of the pulpit.

His preaching was eminently practical, not

merely in the sense of inculcating the various duties that belong to man in his relations to his fellow-man, but those which grow out of the higher relations which he sustains to his Creator and Redeemer. The great truths of Christianity he valued not merely as constituting what he regarded as a system of beautiful speculation, but chiefly as supplying the principles and motives of a holy life, as adapted to mould the human character into such a form, that it may be fit to inhabit a region of perfect purity. There was a period, some thirty or forty years ago, when it was customary for a considerable portion of the clergy of New England to dwell upon certain points of doctrine, to say the least, out of proportion to their relative importance, and in many instances, no doubt, in such an insulated or one-sided form, as to give them a practical influence which their advocates never intended they should have. Dr. Dwight was not insensible to this unhappy tendency in the ministrations of many of his brethren; nor did he hesitate, as opportunity offered, freely to express his disapprobation of it. We remember to have heard of an instance in which a young clergyman, since one of the most distinguished ministers of New England, called upon him; and to an inquiry which the doctor made concerning the state of religion in his neighbor-

hood, he replied, as an evidence of its being in a flourishing state, that the distinguishing *doctrines* of the gospel were faithfully preached. "That is well," replied the doctor, "but are the *duties* of the gospel preached also?"

It is a question not yet, perhaps, fully decided, whether the legitimate object of preaching is best secured by speaking extempore, or from short notes, or by reading from the manuscript sermons that have been written out. That each has its peculiar advantages, must be admitted by all; and whether the one or the other had better be adopted, must depend, in no small degree, on the temperament of the individual, and the taste of the community in which he exercises his ministry. The former mode, speaking extempore, at least so far as respects the language, is probably less safe, but often more effective. It gives the individual the advantage of putting himself in closer contact with his audience; of availing himself of bright thoughts that sometimes rise under an unexpected impulse; of watching the inner man of his hearers, as it impresses itself upon the outer; and of creating, sometimes in a way that he cannot explain, a current of feeling, even a tempest of excitement, that he may direct to the most important purposes. But, then, his success depends so much on the tone of his feelings, and this, again, depends on so many

influences over which he has little control, that he can never be sure even that his own expectations will be answered; and it will be strange if cases of mortifying failure do not occur, which will lead him to crave, as a real blessing, the presence of a written sermon.

The other mode, reading from the manuscript, (by which we do not mean being doggedly chained to it,) has its advantages and disadvantages, lying in just the opposite direction. The man who brings his sermon into the pulpit not only in his head, but in his pocket, has had the opportunity of elaborating it in his study; he knows just what he has produced, and is saved from the uncertainty of what the hour will bring forth; and he has a much greater chance of edifying his audience, other things being equal, than if he were to go to his pulpit, trusting, in a great degree, to the mercy of impulses and circumstances; to say nothing of the fact, that what is written remains written, thus enabling him to preserve the thoughts of his brightest days, to be used, if need be, after his faculties shall have begun to wane. But, then, it is hardly to be expected that this mode of preaching, which brings the faculties of the speaker into exercise only upon the results of his previous labors, and which, at least, divides his eye between his sermon and his audience,



should ever work with so much power upon a congregation, as the sudden flashing of the fancy, and mounting up of the intellect, occasionally incident to extemporaneous speaking.

It is a rare thing that an individual excels in both these modes of preaching; almost all, who extemporize much, write poorly; and comparatively few, who are distinguished for eloquent writing, can claim any great eminence as extemporaneous speakers. This, however, is not from any essential contrariety between the two faculties, for some individuals have possessed both in an eminent degree; but it results chiefly from the want of suitable discipline, from the disposition that too often prevails to cultivate the one habit to the exclusion of the other. Dr. Dwight was a remarkable example of the union of both. His mind was originally adapted, perhaps, equally to writing and speaking; and it is not easy to say whether he cultivated the one or the other with greater care. In the earlier part of his ministry, he preached almost entirely from a brief outline; trusting, for the filling up, to the operations of his mind at the moment of delivery. During his latter years, he read his sermons throughout, almost without exception. The latter were, of course, more highly finished, and more uniformly correct, than the former; but it was his own opinion, as well as that of



others, that his most impressive discourses were delivered without any other premeditation, than that which respected the general train of thought.

The most striking characteristics of his manner in the pulpit were simplicity and dignity. His noble form, his rich, and commanding, and melodious voice, the fire of his eye, his graceful and majestic attitudes, all conspired to give him an advantage, as a public speaker, which comparatively few have enjoyed. In the latter part of his life, after he became accustomed to reading his sermons from the pulpit, he had, as might naturally be expected, less variety of inflection, than in his earlier days, when he was untrammelled by a written discourse; but his reading was always simple, and apparently without the least effort to be impressive. His gestures, whenever they occurred, were always appropriate and graceful; but they were very few, and he would not unfrequently go through a strain of most glowing, exciting eloquence, without moving his hand. But, notwithstanding this, there was everything in his tones, his aspect, his whole manner, to show that he spoke out of the fulness of his heart, and that the truths which he delivered had humbled, or quickened, or cheered his own spirit, before he attempted to bring them in contact with the minds of his audience. Let his subject be what it might, no

man could question the sincerity and earnestness with which his views of it were presented.

Notwithstanding there was a remarkable equality in his ministrations, yet there were instances in which he was carried, by the peculiar circumstances of an occasion, as far above his ordinary efforts as his ordinary efforts exceeded those of an ordinary mind. The most striking case of this kind, that ever came within our knowledge, was that of his sermons on "The Burden of Dumah," delivered on two successive fast-days, within a few weeks of each other, during our last war with Great Britain. It was an occasion which deeply interested his feelings, and roused his mind to its most vigorous tone of action ; and we have never, on any occasion, witnessed a more powerful impression upon an audience than these sermons, especially the first of them, produced. The close of the first half of the first sermon, (for each of them occupied both parts of the day,) in which the preacher described the spirit of infidelity by a reference to the scenes of the French revolution, as an effort of pulpit eloquence, has, it is believed, very rarely been exceeded. We have heard him on other occasions, when he was extremely eloquent, but never when his mind towered with such incomparable majesty, and his feelings glowed with such intense excitement, and his

audience listened with such breathless admiration, as on this, to which we have adverted. The sermons appear admirable in print; but *how* admirable they appeared in the delivery, no one can imagine, who had not the privilege of listening to them.

His public devotional exercises, especially in the college chapel, were marked by very little variety. Almost the only difference in his prayers, unless some event of Providence occurred to vary them, consisted in a different arrangement of the same expressions. But they were always deeply interesting, and were uttered in that subdued and reverent manner, that so well becomes the spirit communing with its Maker. And he was able, at pleasure, completely to rise above the prevailing uniformity. Let some unexpected event of Providence occur, or let him be called to officiate on any extraordinary occasion, and he would scarcely utter a sentence like anything that had been heard from him before. The prayer always derived its complexion entirely from the occasion that called it forth; and even the most minute circumstances were often introduced in the most unstudied and graceful manner, and with the happiest effect.

One or two remarkable instances of his extraordinary aptness and power in prayer, are fresh in our recollection. The news of the death

of Governor Griswold reached New Haven, in the afternoon, shortly before the students were assembled for evening prayers. The president, who was deeply affected by the intelligence, conducted the devotional exercises as usual, and offered a prayer alike honorable to his friendship, his patriotism, and his piety; a prayer, which bore so entirely the impress of the sad event, that those who listened to him seemed to be transported to the house of mourning, and to be actually mingling in the funeral solemnities. Another occasion was the arrival, at New Haven, of the news of the establishment of peace between Great Britain and the United States. It was during the interval between the morning and afternoon services on the Sabbath. The doctor entered the pulpit with emotions, which, when he attempted to speak, well nigh obstructed his utterance. He, however, quickly regained his self-command, and poured out his full heart in a strain of pure, lofty, eloquent devotion, which fixed even the most careless mind in deep solemnity. The terror and desolation of the battle-field on the one hand, and the innumerable blessings of peace on the other, seemed to occupy the field of his vision at the same moment; and his spirit alternately melted in humiliation or glowed with gratitude, as he deplored national sins or acknowledged national mercies



But the occasion of the most remarkable prayer, that we remember ever to have heard from him, was the downfall of Buonaparte, whom he had regarded, from the beginning, as preëminently the scourge of the world. On the evening of the day on which the news of the victory at Waterloo reached New Haven, he entered the college chapel in a spirit of grateful exultation, which spoke most impressively in his countenance before he opened his lips. He commenced the service by reading the fourteenth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, in which the great event which had just occurred seemed to be described with graphic accuracy. The following is a part of the description; "The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations." He then gave out the following verses from the thirty-seventh psalm;

"The haughty sinner have I seen,

Not fearing man, nor God,

Like a tall bay-tree, fair and green

Spreading its arms abroad.



“And lo! he vanished from the ground,  
Destroyed by hands unseen;  
Nor root, nor branch, nor leaf, was found,  
Where all that pride had been.”

Then followed a prayer that was entirely in keeping with the previous exercises; a prayer conceived with a grandeur, and uttered with a fervor, which not only astonished, but well nigh entranced, his audience.

A distinguished civilian, after listening to a most striking prayer from the late Dr. Buckminster, of Portsmouth, on the occasion of the death of General Washington, remarked, on leaving the house, that Dr. Buckminster deserved no credit for that prayer, for it was the effect of immediate inspiration. The prayer of Dr. Dwight, to which we refer, might have justified such a remark, at least as well as any to which we ever listened.

His preaching, for a considerable time after he became president of the college, was more particularly directed to establish the truth of Christianity against the popular infidel cavils of the day. The political events of the latter half of the last century, including, especially, the revolution, had been, in some respects, exceedingly adverse to the progress of morality and religion; and, in addition to this, the writings of Hume and Voltaire, and others of the same school, had been widely spread through the

country; the consequence of which was, that a large portion of young men in the nigher, as well as the lower, circles of society were skeptical in regard to the claims of Christianity. Here President Dwight planted his battery, and for years worked it with a giant's hand. Probably the effect of his preaching, in correcting and purifying public sentiment, was never felt more strongly than during this period; and perhaps there was no other individual to whom the country was, and still is, so deeply indebted as himself, for the return, in some measure, to its primeval reverence for the Holy Scriptures. Happily, some of his noble efforts in vindication of Christianity, which produced so much effect then, have been transmitted to us through the press, and are likely to exert an influence as long as Christianity shall need to be vindicated.

It is an important consideration to be borne in mind, in connection with the estimate of Dr. Dwight's character as a preacher, that with his labors in the pulpit were always associated the duties and responsibilities of some other important sphere of action. There was no period, after he became a preacher, that he was engaged exclusively in the immediate duties of the ministry; though these duties always received a large share of his attention, and, especially while he was a settled clergyman, were regarded

as paramount to everything else. During the earlier part of his life, he yielded to what he regarded the necessity of the case, in devoting himself partly to other pursuits; but then those other pursuits were dictated by the spirit of benevolence, and were directly tributary to the intellectual and moral improvement of his fellow-men. In the latter part of his life, while he exercised the ministerial office, in connection with the presidency of the college, his onerous duties, as president, together with the various public claims that he found it impossible to resist, left him with comparatively little time to meet the demands of the pulpit. The noble discourses which he delivered in the college chapel, to the admiration, as well as edification, of a highly cultivated audience, were written from week to week, under the weight of care and responsibility incident to the instruction and management of a great literary institution. We do not say that he would have been a more eloquent or useful preacher, in any circumstances in which he could have been placed; but it is certainly a proof of extraordinary versatility, that he could have been what he was as a preacher, and, at the same time, have been what he was in various other departments.

## CHAPTER VI.

*His Character as a Teacher, and Head of a College.*

DR. DWIGHT'S course, as a teacher of youth, was one of the longest, as well as one of the most successful, that has been witnessed on this side of the Atlantic. It was continued, almost without interruption, from the age of seventeen till his death, a period of forty-eight years. During this interval, he was at the head of several different literary institutions, in all of which he acquitted himself with honor and usefulness. He conducted, either partly or wholly, the education of between two and three thousand persons. This single fact, apart from all his other services, would abundantly establish his claim to be regarded as a great public benefactor.

His earliest essays at teaching seem to have been immediately after his leaving college, when he took charge of the grammar school at New Haven. Here he continued for two years, discharging his duties, as an instructor, with exemplary fidelity. Notwithstanding his extreme youth, he succeeded admirably in gaining the respect and confidence of his pupils, as well as the warm approbation of their parents. Even at that early



period, he gave promise of becoming, what he actually proved to be, one of the best teachers of the age.

In September, 1771, he was elected to a tutorship in Yale College, at the early age of nineteen. It might have seemed an experiment fraught with no small danger, for a youth like him to become the instructor and guide of a class of young men, more than half of whom, as was actually the case, were older than himself; but the corporation, in electing him, were aware of his remarkable qualifications, and the event proved that they had not estimated them too highly. His urbanity, his decision, his perfect familiarity with every subject on which he instructed, together with the uncommon zeal which he brought to his work, soon rendered him, as he had formerly been, a universal favorite among his pupils; and they quickly forgot his youth, in their admiration of the maturity of his powers and the extent of his acquisitions. While he aimed at making thorough scholars in every branch, his efforts were specially directed to the improvement of his pupils in rhetoric and oratory; a department to which his taste inclined him, and for which his talents qualified him, in an eminent degree; and, withal, one which, up to that time, had been sadly neglected. He, in connection with one or two other



distinguished men, who were associated with him in the tutorship, succeeded, not only in bringing these hitherto neglected branches into repute, but in increasing the general taste for learning, and creating, to a great extent, a new intellectual atmosphere throughout the institution.

At the annual commencement, in September, 1775, the first class which he instructed was admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts; and, on this occasion, he delivered a valedictory address, which was alike creditable to his head and his heart. It was conceived and executed with great beauty and power; and, though not equal to some of his later efforts, must always be regarded as a monument of a far-reaching and accomplished mind. It was printed at the time, but it is now rarely met with, and the few copies of it that remain are carefully treasured by their possessors.

In May, 1777, in consequence of the agitation and danger to which the country generally, and especially the seaport towns, were subjected in the progress of the revolution, the college was disbanded, and the students scattered to various places, each class under the direction of its respective tutor. Dr. Dwight went with his class to Wethersfield, where he remained during the summer. Early in the succeeding fall, owing to a domestic affliction which has

already been noticed, he resigned his office as tutor, and took up his residence with his mother, at Northampton.

This event, however, scarcely occasioned a suspension of his labors as a teacher; for he was no sooner settled at Northampton, than he opened a school, of the higher order, for the instruction of both sexes. This school, to which he devoted himself during a portion of each day, was extensively patronized, not only by the inhabitants of the town, but by many highly respectable families abroad; and its establishment marked an era in the progress of intellectual culture in the surrounding country. At the same time, a part of one of the classes from college resorted to Northampton to avail themselves of the benefit of his instruction; and he conducted their studies, through all the various departments, till they had completed the prescribed course.

The next stage in his history, as a teacher, is the establishment of a school in Greenfield, shortly after his induction to the pastoral office. He seems to have been led to this partly by the inadequacy of the support which he received from his parish, and partly from his love of teaching, in connection with a proper appreciation of his ability to render good service to the world in this capacity. This school, like

the one at Northampton, was open to both sexes; and it became, not only the common resort of the better class of youth in its vicinity, but also attracted attention, and gained pupils, from remote parts of the country. Here was taught every branch that belonged to a regular college course; and not a few here received their entire education, who have since occupied important stations of responsibility and usefulness. A new and better impulse was given, especially to female education; and the importance of solid acquisitions was urged in place of mere glittering accomplishments. Probably the desirable change in female education, which has been going on from that day to this, is to be attributed more, in its origin, to Dr. Dwight, than to any other man. His school was continued during the twelve years of his residence at Greenfield; and the whole number of pupils, who were under his care, exceeded a thousand. Here and there one survives to testify to the ability and faithfulness of the teacher, and the high advantages which the school presented.

The presidency of Yale College having become vacant in May, 1795, by the death of Dr. Stiles, public sentiment at once universally designated Dr. Dwight as the most suitable person to be his successor; and, accordingly, he was soon chosen to that important office, and

entered on its duties in the ensuing autumn. Though he had been eminently useful in the different stations, which he had previously occupied, his entrance upon this more extended field constituted an era not less in his own history than in the history of the college.

No sooner had he taken the presidential chair, than he assumed an amount of labor which scarcely any body besides himself could have ventured to undertake. He discharged, and continued through his whole presidential life to discharge, the appropriate duties of four distinct offices, each of which might have furnished ample employment for an individual. Besides the peculiar duties of the presidency, he instructed the senior class in their appropriate studies, and acted, also, as professor of belles-lettres and oratory, and finally of theology.

One of his first objects was to effect a reform in the discipline of the institution. Up to this period, the system of discipline that had prevailed in Yale College was substantially the same with that of the English universities, including the infliction of fines, and an almost abject servility on the part of the lower classes toward the higher. There was little in this system to appeal to the nobler principles of a young man. The privilege of doing wrong was virtually purchased with money; and if the offender could



only have free access to his father's purse, to cancel the obligations to justice under which his misdeeds brought him, there was little to impose a check upon his wayward inclinations. The new president was one of the first to perceive the evil of this mode of discipline, and, it is believed, the very first in our country to attempt anything like a radical reform. He began at once to deal with his students as young gentlemen, and to urge them to do right from the high considerations growing out of their character as intellectual, moral, and responsible beings. He endeavored to make each one feel that he was intrusted with the keeping, in a great degree, not only of his own character, but of the happiness of his parents; and, while he appealed to the principle of a well-regulated self-love on the one hand, he appealed with no less urgency to the feeling of filial affection and gratitude on the other.

As soon as he was aware that a young man had begun to evince erratic dispositions, he was sure to expostulate with him with parental earnestness, and exert himself to the utmost to reclaim him from his wanderings; and many were the instances in which these private efforts completely availed, and the youthful transgressor was not only saved from ruin, but subsequently became an ornament to society. But, after a



course of private admonition had been ineffectually tried long enough to demonstrate the hopelessness of reformation, he regarded it as essential to the welfare of the institution that the offender should be separated from it; and at this point he never hesitated to proceed to final excision, no matter whether the parents might be in the highest or lowest walks of society. In the administration of the government of the college, he carried a remarkably even hand; with a paternal regard for the interests of his students, he united a dignity that always inspired veneration, a vigilance that nothing could elude, a firmness that nothing could shake. The consequence was, that his system of discipline operated, like a machine in perfect order, without embarrassment, and with sure and good results.

During the whole period of his presidency, there was never anything like a general rebellion against the authority of the institution; and it was a rare case, that discipline was administered where the great mass of the students did not promptly acquiesce in the justice of the sentence. We do not intend by this remark to intimate, that the insurrectionary spirit has not often discovered itself among students even under the most wise and equitable administration. Such cases, we know, have occurred under the management of some of the best disciplinarians, that

our country has furnished. We only mean that, while there was everything in Dr. Dwight's character, as well as his whole system of *régime*, to produce a contrary result, it never occurred, under his administration, that there were unfavorable circumstances sufficiently strong to defeat it.

It was not merely in his treatment of offenders, that he exemplified the paternal spirit towards his students, but also in the encouragement which he uniformly extended to the desponding and self-distrustful. We have before us a letter from one of our most distinguished American clergymen, gratefully acknowledging the kindly influence, which the president had exerted by a word in rekindling aspirations which misfortune had well nigh quenched. He had been obliged to leave college two or three times on account of his enfeebled health, and had returned finally to complete the prescribed course, rather to gratify his parents, than from any expectation of accomplishing much in life. He had a mind of high order, and occasionally, under a transient influence, would put forth a fine vigorous effort; and on one occasion he read, in the hearing of the president, an exercise upon one of the more abstruse subjects in morals, which showed him to be capable of the most profound speculation. The president commented upon it in a manner,

which the young man's modesty could scarcely endure ; but it gave a new impulse to his efforts, and not improbably had much to do in deciding the complexion of his life. He felt from that time, more deeply than he had ever felt before, the importance of cultivating his faculties to the utmost ; and his devotion to intellectual improvement, which may be said, at least in its intenser form, to have commenced then, has continued without interruption to the present day.

At a later period, after he had entered the ministry, and was called to one of the most important congregations in New England, he was strongly disposed to decline the call, on the ground of his inability to occupy successfully so wide a field. Dr. Dwight, who had formed a proper estimate of his powers, advised him unhesitatingly to accept the call, assuring him that he had not a doubt of his complete success. He said to him with great emphasis, "You do not know what you can do. No young man, of even respectable talents, knows what he can accomplish ; and hence, in many cases, they accomplish so little. Believe me, I have no fears of the issue ; and I know much better what you are capable of, than you know yourself." The result was, that the young man accepted the call, and fully verified his teacher's prediction

in an able and useful ministry. He was, however, subject occasionally to fits of despondency, when he felt that it was scarcely possible for him to proceed in his labors; and on one of these occasions, when the preparation for a fast day was before him, he called upon his ever-faithful friend, and declared to him his conviction, that he could not write another decent fast sermon, and that he was now brought fully to a stand. "Why," said the doctor, "you are in as bad a plight as President Edwards said he was once, when he could not find another text in the Bible upon which he could make a sermon." He then asked him if he had any subject in his mind; and when the young clergyman mentioned one that had occurred to him, the president replied, "Go, then, to your study, ask the divine blessing, and make as good a sermon as you can on the text you have mentioned, and it will be good enough." The direction was cheerfully complied with; the spirit of despondency fled, and the result was a discourse which surprised the writer and preacher not less than it edified his audience.

The treatment of Dr. Dwight towards this young man, continuing even after he was actively engaged in his professional duties, was a fair specimen of the influence which he aimed to exert upon his students generally. There



was no maxim more prominent in the intercourse which he held with them, than that, if they would be anything, they must work for it. "Genius," he often remarked, "is nothing more nor less than the power of making efforts." And the effect of this great truth, so constantly inculcated, was realized in the experience of multitudes. Many, who fancied that they were shut up, by their original stinted endowments, to an humble mediocrity, found out, to their surprise, and the world has since found out to its benefit, that there was a spirit of intellectual might dwelling within them, which made them capable of even magnificent efforts; while others, who imagined that the fires of their genius burned so brightly as to supersede the necessity of effort, and under this impression were likely to become dunces as well as drones, had their mistake corrected in season to prevent the utter stagnation of their noble faculties, and to secure to them an honorable place among the good and the great of their generation.

His mode of instruction was not less worthy of praise than his mode of discipline. No matter in what branch he had occasion to instruct, such was the versatility of his mind, and such the variety and extent of his acquisitions, that he always poured light on the subject of the recitation. Instead of slavishly adhering to the text-



book, he used it only as a general guide to his own course of thought; and it was no uncommon thing for him to occupy a large portion of the time allotted to the recitation, in exposing to his pupils the weak points and fallacious reasonings of the author they were studying. His singularly retentive memory had treasured up an almost endless variety of anecdotes, illustrative of nearly every subject that could be presented to the mind; and these anecdotes were always perfectly at command, and were generally introduced with the happiest effect. Many of them, withal, were exceedingly amusing, and his class soon learned to look for them as the spice of each recitation. It is, however, perhaps due to candor to say, that, like some other very great men, he was somewhat inclined to credulity; and hence it sometimes happened, that he had given his faith to representations for which he found it difficult to command the faith of his pupils. His most humorous anecdotes were usually told with an imperturbable gravity.

In his recitations he was never at loss what to say, and seemed to say everything in the best manner. He had matured thoughts upon every subject; and as for language, he was the very *beau idéal* of the *copia verborum*. A question that would be answered by the student in a

monosyllable, would lead him off into an almost boundless field of thought, where he would expatiate with the utmost vigor and earnestness, until his class would forget that, instead of being engaged in a recitation, they were not listening to a lecture. Indeed, the recitations which he conducted often assumed the character of lectures; and the few questions which he asked only marked the different heads into which they were divided. This was especially true of the weekly recitation in Vincent's Catechism, that being the only theological text-book then used in college. Each question he made the subject of a theological lecture; and even those, who did not entirely agree with him in his views of Christian doctrine, could not fail to admire the ability and eloquence with which he defended them.

It was a stated exercise of the senior class once a week to discuss, in the hearing of the president, some question that had been previously agreed upon, after which he acted as umpire, expressing and defending his own opinion in respect to it. This exercise was one of the most interesting and profitable in which the senior class engaged; and on no occasions, perhaps, were the powers of the president more admirably exhibited than on these. It was here, especially, that he showed how various were his acquisitions. The subjects of discussion were ta-

ken promiscuously anywhere from the wide field of human thought, and were connected with literature, or science, or politics, or history, or morals, or religion, as the taste of the disputants might dictate; but let the subject belong to whatever department it might, it was not only never without the circle of the president's knowledge, but rarely seemed even to task his faculties in the discussion.

In these "decisions," as they were called, he made some of his finest extemporaneous efforts; and some of the subjects which occupied him, he treated in a far more eloquent and effective manner, than he treated the same subjects with his manuscript before him in the pulpit. One of his nephews, a gentleman distinguished alike for his literature and philanthropy, took copious notes of his remarks on these occasions, which he has since given to the world in a small volume. The book is a worthy memorial of his venerable relative, and contains a great amount of valuable thought; but while it is not disparaging to the editor, it is due to Dr. Dwight to say, that but a very imperfect idea can be gathered, from these sketches, of the masterly efforts which they are designed to record. His students alone, who remember the graceful ease with which he sat in his great chair, at the head of the recitation-room; the gradual kin-

dling of his spirit under the subject which he had in hand; the flashes of wit and genius accompanied with the lightning-glances of his eye; they only can have an adequate impression of the grace and power of attraction, that characterized these comparatively unstudied efforts.

As professor of theology, Dr. Dwight had a class of theological students constantly under his care, consisting chiefly of resident graduates. They were in the habit of reading dissertations on some subject that had been previously given out, and then hearing his views on the same subject in a lecture of considerable length. As theology was his favorite branch, it is hardly necessary to say, that his instructions in this department were preëminently rich and satisfactory. Not a small number of the most useful and eminent clergymen in New England, previously to the establishment of our theological seminaries, were educated to their profession under his care.

It has already been noticed, that, as a preacher, he probably exerted a more important influence than any other man in staying the progress of infidelity at the commencement of his presidential course; but his influence was exerted out of the pulpit as well as in it. His course, in reference to this, is happily illustrated by the following anecdote, which, though already in print, will bear to be repeated



It seems that the students, in preparation for their forensic discussion, (the exercise already referred to,) were accustomed to select several questions, and then to refer them to the president to choose whichever he might think proper. Previously to his induction to the presidency, the absurd notion had prevailed, that, owing to the infidel tendencies of the day, it would put in jeopardy the faith of the students to allow discussions on points involving the divine authority of the Scriptures; just as if Christianity were not strong enough to bear her own weight. One of the questions, which they offered to the choice of the president, was, "Are the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the word of God?" But they did it rather to try, perhaps to annoy him, than from any expectation that he would select it as the subject for discussion. He, however, did select it unhesitatingly; and at the same time requested that those, who should take the negative side in the argument, should feel entirely untrammelled, and should bring forward everything that might seem to them to have a legitimate bearing on the question, assuring them, moreover, that they should not be held responsible for any views they might choose to maintain in the discussion, provided only that they were advanced with a reverence becoming the sacredness of the subject. Accordingly, when



the discussion came on, all, or nearly all, the disputants were found on one side; they had come with their armor burnished, and glittering for a conflict with the representative of Christianity; and those beardless heroes really expected soon to see Goliath at their feet.

After they had played the infidel *con amore* till they had exhausted themselves, during which the president sat as a silent and attentive listener, he opened his batteries upon them with a power, which caused them to shrink into narrower and narrower dimensions, till they seemed to themselves actually to be undergoing the process of annihilation. First he examined their arguments one by one, and, with incomparable ease and grace, turned them into thin air. Then he brought out, most vividly and impressively, the argument on the other side, showing, by a train of consecutive and unanswerable reasoning, that Christianity must be what she claims to be, and that to reject her claims is to set philosophy and common sense alike at defiance. The effort was worthy of the occasion and the man; and the effect was worthy of both. His youthful auditors were convinced, that Christianity was not a matter to be trifled with; and while they quailed beneath the force of his arguments, they seem at once to have given their infidelity to the winds. From that time, the finger of scorn

was no longer pointed at the Christian, as if he were the personification of weakness ; the voice of opposition and gainsaying, in respect to the divine authority of the Scriptures, was hushed ; and a new era opened upon the institution, an era of reverence for the Bible.

We do not mean to intimate that Yale College, at this period, had yielded further to an infidel influence than some other similar institutions ; further, indeed, than might have been expected from the operation of those causes previously adverted to, which had done much to diffuse a general corruption through the land ; but that much of this spirit prevailed there, no one can question ; and it is equally certain that it was chiefly through the president's influence, and especially his influence on the occasion to which we have just referred, that this spirit was in a great measure dislodged.

The presidency of Dr. Dwight furnished but little matter for history. It was the same routine of duties, from one year to another, with comparatively little variation. The best history of it, that can be written, is found in the long list of distinguished individuals, who were fitted by his instrumentality for various stations of dignity, responsibility, and usefulness. It is interesting to look over the college catalogue, during the period of his presidency, and see how

large a portion of those, who have since had a primary agency in directing the civil and religious interests of our country, have their names here recorded. No one, who reflects, can fail to perceive that the president of a college, especially of one so extensive and commanding as Yale, is as one of the chief fountains of influence; and hence there is scarcely anything so important to the well-being of society, as the selection of suitable persons to occupy these high places. Let our colleges be under the direction of weak, unprincipled, or even eccentric men, and we shall soon see the effect of it on our educated youth; the weakness or the waywardness, which they have contemplated in their teachers, will insensibly come to form an element in their own characters; whereas, let these institutions be under the control, not only of the gifted and accomplished, but of the frank and honorable men, who inculcate the necessity of unbending moral rectitude in their instructions, and exemplify it in their lives, and we may confidently expect that the generation of youth, formed under the influence of such men, will reflect, in some measure, the image of their teachers, and be prepared to render good service to their country and the world.

Such was the character of Dr. Dwight for high moral as well as intellectual qualities, that

no parent could reasonably hesitate to confide a son to his care; on the contrary, the exalted reputation which he enjoyed in every part of the land, and the entire confidence that was universally felt in his character, were the occasion of bringing to the college large numbers, who otherwise would have been sent to other institutions. It hardly need be added, that this confidence was always fully justified to the parent in the result; and even if the son proved wayward, thus failing to fulfil parental hopes, it was not for want of a good example, or the most vigorous efforts, on the part of the president, to prevent it.

From 1795, the period of his induction to the presidency, to the early part of 1816, his labors in connection with the college were continued without interruption; and though, from this time to the close of his life, he was almost a constant sufferer from the disease of which he died, yet the moment he could gather strength enough for the least effort, he uniformly manifested a disposition to return to his official duties. During the last three or four weeks that he met his class, it was evidently with extreme difficulty that he endured the fatigue incident to the recitation; and yet there were times when the intellectual gained such a mastery over the physical, that he seemed temporarily insensible to



bodily suffering, and burst forth in the most stirring eloquence, or the most powerful argumentation. His last meeting with his class was on the 27th of November, 1817, about six weeks previous to his death; for though his mind was still active, and his time usefully employed, his debility and suffering, from that time, were so great as to render him inadequate to the effort of conducting a recitation. As he had given the full vigor of more than twenty years of most untiring effort to the service of the college, it was his privilege, and that of the friends of the institution, to know that his efforts had not been without their reward. While the tone of discipline and instruction had been most essentially improved, the moral character and intellectual tastes and acquirements of the pupils had been proportionally elevated. The institution, in the mean time, was constantly growing in favor with the community at large, and, through the fame of its president particularly, was becoming extensively known in various European countries. Happily, the spirit which animated him has descended upon the great and good men, who have since been charged with its interests; and there are none more ready than they to bear grateful and honorable testimony to his memory, or to identify the glory of the college with the lustre of his name.



## CHAPTER VII.

*His Character as a Patriot. — His political Opinions, and Habit of expressing them.*

FROM the view that has already been presented of Dr. Dwight's character as a man, it might naturally enough be inferred, that he was distinguished for a lofty patriotism. It would seem impossible, that, with a mind constituted like his, glowing with great thoughts and high and generous aspirations, he should overlook, among the various objects of pursuit, the welfare of his country; and what might have been expected from the original endowments of the man, is fully realized in the development of his character, and the history of his life. He was an earnest, active patriot. In his earlier years, he had bright visions of the future greatness and glory of America, as the country destined, above any other, to bear a part in the moral renovation of the world; and these he continued to cherish, with increasing vigor of hope and joy, to his dying day. There was scarcely any subject, at the mention of which his mind more instinctively kindled, and rose into the regions of moral sublimity, than the privileges and prospects of the American nation

He had lived long enough before the commencement of the revolution to be familiar with the causes which produced it; for, though he was yet only a young man, his inquisitive mind had carefully marked every stage of the controversy between the two countries, and he was thoroughly convinced, from observation and reflection, of the rectitude of the American cause. Accordingly, he entered into it with the utmost vigor of mind and strength of purpose; and, during the whole progress of the contest, rendered, in various ways, highly important service toward the achievement of our independence.

As he had chosen the ministry for his profession, there was no way in which he could serve his country so directly, in the exercise of its appropriate functions, as by becoming a chaplain in the army; and, accordingly, as we have already had occasion to notice, he held this office for a year, in the early part of the revolution, and would have continued to hold it, perhaps, till the declaration of peace, had it not been for what he regarded the paramount claims that were made upon him as a son and a brother. The duties of this highly difficult office he discharged with great fidelity, and with the best effect. His obliging disposition and winning manners gave him ready access to the minds of all with whom he was brought in contact; while his commanding eloquence, united with a

conscientious conviction of the integrity of his country's cause, enabled him to speak both to the judgment and the sensibilities of his hearers with uncommon power. While he endeavored, so far as the circumstances would permit, to perform the appropriate duties of a pastor, and to labor for the spiritual interests of his fellow-men, many of his efforts were specially directed to sustain the American cause; to impress the army with the conviction, that the God of armies was on their side, and thus quicken them to loftier impulses of patriotic feeling. One or two of his discourses, delivered during the period of his chaplaincy, were published, though without his name; and they breathe a spirit honorable, indeed, to his intelligence and piety, but especially to his patriotism. He is said to have enjoyed, in an unusual degree, the respect and confidence of many of the higher officers of the army, and to have been favored with Washington's particular regard.

It was not merely in the discharge of his official duties as chaplain, that he served his country during this period; but whatever influence he could exert for her welfare, in any relation, he exerted with the utmost promptness and alacrity. Particularly, he rendered important service by bringing into exercise his poetical genius. The indescribable power of music is,

perhaps, never felt more powerfully than in connection with martial and patriotic songs. The success of an election on the one hand, or of a battle on the other, has, no doubt, often been greatly assisted or impeded through the inspiring or disheartening influence of song, according to the manner in which it may have been directed. Several highly popular songs were produced by him in the progress of the revolution, which were admirably fitted to fan the flame of patriotism in the army; and his "Columbia," particularly, is never likely to go out of date, until the funeral obsequies of American liberty shall have been celebrated.

Notwithstanding he withdrew from the army, in obedience to the dictates of filial duty, that high feeling of regard for his country's welfare, that led him to enter it, suffered no abatement, and he was still on the alert to render every patriotic service that he could, in consistency with those domestic claims which he had undertaken to meet. Under the influence of this feeling, he mingled considerably, at this period, in the civil affairs of the county and state in which he resided; and he was always one of the controlling spirits of every public body to which he happened to belong. His influence was exerted with the happiest effect in resisting the tendencies to lawlessness and disorgan-



ization, which had become extensively prevalent, and which, in some cases, had assumed an alarming aspect. In 1781 and 1782, he represented the town of Northampton in the General Court of Massachusetts; and, though he was still a young man, and had had no experience in the business of legislation, he soon acquired an influence in the counsels of that body, which few other members, of whatever age, possessed.

That was one of the most critical periods, for the exercise of legislative influence, that our country has ever known. In the progress of the revolution, the ancient fabric of civil society had been shaken to pieces, and out of its ruins there was to arise a new fabric, constructed upon a principle which had never been thoroughly tested in the history of the world. The ultimate object of the revolution was far from being gained, even when we had succeeded in obtaining the recognition of our independence from the mother country. That was, indeed, the germ of liberty, the germ of national greatness; but whether it was to expand and ripen under the influence of wise and patriotic counsels, or to wither under the influence of licentious and distracted counsels, was yet to be determined; and it may safely be said, that the great minds of the day were not more severely tasked in the commencement and prog-



ress of the revolutionary contest, than in carrying it out to its legitimate results. Dr. Dwight, by his uncommon wisdom and eloquence, was well fitted to sustain the legislative responsibilities of this trying period. While, on the one hand, he met foreign oppression with the most unyielding resistance, on the other, he showed himself the uniform and uncompromising friend of law and order at home. His voice was always lifted up in behalf of right, and was always listened to with earnest and considerate attention.

His civil career terminated on his withdrawing from the legislature, in 1782. From the time that he assumed the responsibility of a pastoral charge, he never mingled directly in political affairs, though his eyes were always open upon every public movement, and he expressed, without hesitation, his opinion on all the exciting political questions of the day. He was a decided federalist of the Hamilton school, and firmly believed that this general system of policy alone could insure the permanent prosperity of our country. He was particularly jealous of the influence of the French nation upon our own, and regarded an alliance between America and France as the climax of all national evils; in his own emphatic language, as the union of "living health and beauty to a corpse dissolving with the plague." The war

of 1812, between this country and Great Britain, he verily believed was on our part an unrighteous war; and he declared this conviction freely, both in public and in private. Not that he maintained that our government had no cause of complaint toward the government of Great Britain; but he insisted that it was not sufficient to justify the horrible experiment of a war; and, whether he was right or wrong in his estimate, he considered the laurels, which our victories secured to us, rather as the monuments of national injustice and crime than of national glory.

As the great questions upon which the declaration of war turned were the agitating questions of the day, it was not uncommon for the young men composing the senior class, and sharing, as they did, in the prevailing excitement, to select some of these questions as topics for disputation, in the hearing of the president; and sometimes what he considered the wrong side of the question was defended with great earnestness and ability. Perhaps he never showed himself more eloquent than he did on some of these occasions. After having listened, for half an hour, to a train of remark, which he considered not only as absurd, but of deeply injurious tendency in respect to our national welfare, his mind would kindle into a tone of in-

dignant eloquence, which would not only neutralize the arguments of his young antagonists, but make them appear ridiculous in proportion to their zeal. It ought to be remarked, however, that this coming down like an avalanche was not an every-day matter; if a student differed from him with becoming moderation and respect, he had nothing unpleasant to apprehend in the issue; it was only those whose zeal seemed to him licentious or arrogant, that he met with such searching and scathing severity.

He was far from making the pulpit an arena for political strife; and yet he regarded it as the appropriate theatre for occasional discussions connected with the proper administration of civil government. Several of his miscellaneous published discourses partake more or less of this character; particularly his sermon on the 4th of July, his election sermon, his sermon before the Society of Cincinnati, and his sermons preached on the state and national fasts in 1812. These, and all other of his discourses of the same general character, evinced a familiar acquaintance with the constitution of society, and a discriminating judgment in respect to the various influences for good or evil, by which society is affected. Even where he felt himself constrained to express opinions from the pulpit adverse to those of his political oppo-

nents, on questions which he regarded vital to our national interests, though he spoke freely and boldly, yet, to every unprejudiced mind, it was obvious that he spoke out of the fulness of a patriotic heart; so that those, who believed he was wrong, still never doubted that he was wrong from honest conviction.

To everything that appeared to him to involve his country's welfare, he was always awake. Her literary interests, especially, he fostered with the utmost care. Notwithstanding the best part of his life was spent in presiding over one of our oldest and most influential colleges, yet he was far enough from being exclusive in his attachment to that institution; instead of being jealous of the prosperity of other similar institutions, he rejoiced in it, and was always ready to promote it by every means in his power.

On one occasion, while he was a member of the Massachusetts legislature, he had an opportunity of rendering important service to the University of Cambridge. A petition for a grant in favor of that institution had been brought up, and negatived by a large majority, while he happened to be out of the house. Finding, on his return, what had been done, he immediately moved and secured a reconsideration of the question, and, by a speech of more than an hour, characterized by eloquence and powerful argument,



he completely changed the opinion of the house, and, in the issue, obtained a triumphant majority in favor of the measure. His services on this occasion were gratefully acknowledged by many of the friends, and some of the officers, of the institution. And the same zeal for the cause of learning marked his whole subsequent course. His heart was in every effort, public or private, for the diffusion of useful knowledge; and one principal reason was, that he regarded this as a leading element in our national stability and safety, as a pledge of our continued national existence.

The plan of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences originated with him, and the association was formed, in 1799, through his instrumentality. The object which this association proposed, was to obtain a correct and complete statistical view of the state of Connecticut; and, with a view to this, a printed list of inquiries, covering the whole ground contemplated, was sent into every town. Dr. Dwight himself, notwithstanding the feebleness of his sight and the constant pressure of his duties, prepared a statistical history of New Haven, which was afterwards published by the Academy. It was evidently the result of no small degree of research, and involves within a brief compass a great amount of valuable historic material. For



the want of that vigorous and extensive coöperation in the enterprise which he had been led to expect, the institution gradually languished, and we know not whether it has at present much more than a nominal existence. It is just occasion for congratulation, however, that an historical society, with somewhat of the same general design, has, within a few years, come into existence in Connëcticut, which is understood to be prosecuting its objects with great vigor, and under highly favorable auspices.

The same spirit is happily diffusing itself throughout the country, so that there are now not only individuals, but institutions, in almost every part of it, devoted to historical research; and while, by this means, many of the materials of our past history, which have been either accidentally preserved or carefully treasured, have some permanent lodgment secured to them for the benefit of future generations, here, also, is conveyed the pledge, that hereafter there will be kept an accurate register of passing events, that will save our posterity the trouble which the negligence of our ancestors has devolved upon us. It is wonderful what an amount of historical information has, within the last twenty years, been gathered up from amidst the neglected rubbish of by-gone days; and every well-wisher to his country must desire that this patriotic work

may go on, till the last old garret and chest in the land shall have yielded up their hidden treasures as a contribution to our national history.

---

## CHAPTER VIII.

*His Character as a Philanthropist.—His Interest in benevolent and religious Societies.*

DR. DWIGHT's philanthropy was the result of a naturally benevolent spirit, moulded and guided by the influence of Christianity. He was constitutionally quick to feel for the wants and sufferings of his fellow-creatures, and, apart from all religious considerations, would have been regarded a benevolent man. But Christianity gave to his benevolence a purity, an elevation, an expansiveness, which, under any other influence, could never have belonged to it. Christianity taught him to regard every man as a brother, no matter of what clime, or color, or condition, or character; taught him to lose sight of all considerations of distance, or barbarism, as well as obstacles of any other kind, in forming his estimate of the claims of human woe. He remembered that man is everywhere the same being; that he possesses originally the same faculties, the

same susceptibilities of improvement, and enjoyment, and suffering; that he may be educated to become an angel or a fiend; and hence he never looked with indifference upon any well-directed effort for meliorating the character or the condition of any portion of the human race. He knew that suffering on the opposite side of the globe was just as hard to be endured as if it were at his own door; and hence, while he stretched out his hand for the immediate relief of the sufferer in the one case, he offered his prayers, and exerted his influence, and gave his money, with no less cheerfulness, in the other. Not but what he recognized a priority of claim in cases of suffering immediately under our eye, above those which may occur at a great distance; but he would never admit, for a moment, that distance could cancel our obligations to the wretched, unless they were entirely beyond our reach.

He was always alive both to the temporal and spiritual interests of the needy around him. While he contributed personally, with great liberality, to the supply of their wants, he was ever ready to lend his influence to sustain any system of effort with reference to this object, that the charity of those around him might devise. In 1810, there existed in New Haven several benevolent societies of females, who had charged themselves with the oversight of the suffering

poor ; and one of these societies directed its efforts particularly to the relief and education of poor African children. Dr. Dwight was requested to deliver a sermon in behalf of these several societies ; and, in complying with their request, he produced, not, indeed, one of his most intellectual and brilliant discourses, but a discourse which was preëminently characterized by the benevolent spirit which it was designed to recommend. With great tenderness and earnestness, he commends each of the societies to the charitable patronage of their fellow-citizens ; but he acknowledges that he feels a peculiar interest in the one designed to look after the degraded descendants of the children of Africa. In alluding to this class of sufferers, his spirit kindles with fresh and benignant fervor ; he seems instantly to fathom the depth of their misfortunes and wrongs, and breaks forth in the most stirring appeals to the charity of his audience, which it would seem that an iron insensibility could scarcely resist.

It was, however, the spiritual rather than the temporal wants of his fellow-men, which chiefly awakened his sympathies, and drew forth his most vigorous efforts. As he regarded the truths of the gospel, as constituting the appropriate aliment for man's moral nature, as being absolutely essential to the proper development of



his faculties, and the regeneration and exaltation of his spirit, he was ever watchful for opportunities to bring these truths in contact with the minds of his fellow-men ; and hence he manifested a glowing zeal for sending the gospel through the world.

His zeal for the promotion of the best interests of his fellow-men rendered him always the active and earnest friend of the cause of missions, of every effort, indeed, that had for its object the moral renovation of the world. In the establishment of the Connecticut Missionary Society, one of the oldest and most efficient institutions of the kind in our country, he was particularly active, and subsequently assisted it not only by his influence, but by generous pecuniary contributions. He was also one of the founders of the American Board of Foreign Missions, another institution, which he always cherished with the utmost regard, and which has ever since been sending forth its missionaries into various portions of the heathen world. The sermon which he delivered in 1813, at the anniversary of this society, is a fine exhibition of a philanthropic spirit, and shows how intensely his heart was fixed on the subjugation of the nations to the spiritual and peaceful reign of the Messiah.

Few men in the church were more strenuous



advocates than he for a well educated as well as pious ministry; and, before the existence of our theological seminaries, probably no one did more for the promotion of this object. He was, however, deeply impressed with the importance of some more systematic provision for theological education; and when the project for establishing the seminary at Andover was started, he entered into it with all his heart, and lent to it the whole amount of his influence. He preached the sermon on the occasion of its first opening, in connection with the ordination of its first professor. He was always, from the beginning, one of the visitors of the institution, and stood ready, on every occasion, to promote its interests, as long as he lived. He regarded its establishment, with that of other similar institutions about the same time, as marking an era in the history, not only of the Christian ministry, but of the regeneration of the world.

But perhaps there was no one, of all our great benevolent institutions, which occupied a wider place in the field of his vision, or a deeper place in his Christian sensibilities, than the American Bible Society. From the period of the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he had been earnestly desirous of seeing a similar institution in our own country; and, though his enfeebled health would not

permit him to be present and take part in the deliberations of the convention that formed it, yet he did not fail to manifest the grateful interest which he felt in the enterprise. We have received from a highly respectable clergyman, who was, at that time, his amanuensis, a letter, the following extract from which will illustrate his views and feelings in respect to the formation of this society.

“It was in the latter part of October, 1815, that I commenced the duties of the year. Several hours, daily, were to be occupied in writing, chiefly in his presence, and at his immediate dictation. I remember, that, almost on the first occasion of my repairing to his study, and taking my place at the desk, having prepared my paper, and filled my pen with ink, he dictated these words; ‘*Arguments for an American Bible Society, and Objections to it considered.*’ I distinctly remember the impression made upon my mind by the announcement of this title. I thought our good teacher was now in his dotage, or he could not cherish the Utopian project of uniting rival denominations and sectional interests in such an enterprise. But, as he proceeded with the discussion, his soul kindled with enthusiasm, and his arguments were so convincing, that my doubts were dissipated, and a feeling of surprise succeeded, that such

an institution had not sprung into existence long before. Of the article, when completed, he directed me to make several copies, and gave me the names of influential men, ministers and laymen, to whom they were to be transmitted. His effective eloquence on that occasion was only equalled by the celebrated 'Address' of Dr. Mason, prepared during the sittings of the convention.

"I had the opportunity of being present as a spectator during the deliberations of that body, and, on my return to New Haven, at a time when Dr. Dwight was laboring under the disease which terminated his life, gave him some account of what I had witnessed. His reply was to this effect; 'It would have delighted me to be there. I think I could have *spoken* on such an occasion, and would have added, Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'"

He had a strong confidence that a brighter day was soon to open upon the world. He saw, or thought he saw, in the aspects of Providence, much to indicate that the winter season of the church was nearly past, and that the spring time of universal moral renovation would quickly succeed. He looked over the world; a large portion of it enveloped in darkness, sunk in degradation, and withering under

the oppressor's arm, and his eye affected his heart. But his philanthropic spirit found rest in the assurance, that in due time all this darkness, and degradation, and oppression, will cease, and the human race, under the influence of Christianity, gradually mount up to a glorious elevation.

The following incident illustrates the delightful confidence with which he dwelt on the prospect of the rapidly advancing improvement of man, and the ultimate and complete triumph of Christian truth. The first *exclusively* religious newspaper in this country was undertaken at New Haven, at his earnest recommendation. Shortly before it commenced, the publisher called upon him for advice, and expressed himself doubtfully concerning the success of the enterprise, on the ground that matter could not be supplied sufficient for filling its columns, provided it were issued at regular periods. "Matter," exclaimed Dr. Dwight, with unaffected surprise, "why, don't you know that the millennium is coming? Once begin, and the Spirit and Providence of God will supply you with matter, till your limits will be too narrow to contain it." The remark proved prophetic, and the work, for many years, enjoyed an extensive patronage from the Christian community.

He was a lover and promoter of peace. This



trait in his character, in connection with his acknowledged wisdom and extensive influence, was a reason why his counsel was often sought in cases of personal and ecclesiastical controversy. In very many instances was his judicious and Christian interposition rendered instrumental in curing alienations and healing divisions, which put at defiance every other conciliatory influence that could be brought to bear upon them.

He inculcated the law of kindness not less by his example than his instructions. There were few men of his day, whose characters he admired so much as that of Wilberforce; but it was his philanthropy, rather than his statesmanship, that attracted him. To do good he regarded as the chief glory of an intelligent being, the crowning attribute of a perfect character.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

*His Character as an Author.—His various Publications, in Poetry and Prose, on Theology and miscellaneous Subjects.*

No man, not even the humblest, lives for himself alone. There are some points of contact



between him and society, some avenues by which his spirit works its way into the common mass, and diffuses itself, to some extent at least, either for good or evil. Men who hold important stations, who, by their counsels, control the machinery of government, or by their character give tone to society, exert an influence of which they have themselves no adequate conception, an influence, which, instead of passing away with one generation, may not improbably mould the destinies of many generations. It is the nature of moral influence not only to be enduring, but cumulative. Who supposes, that what Washington did for his country, or what Franklin did for the world, was done only for the particular generation to which these noble spirits belonged. On the contrary, that generation received the benefit of their exploits only to transmit it to those who should come after; and their influence, at this hour, upon the intellectual, political, and moral destinies of the world, is far greater than when the noble actions from which it emanated were performed. We sit under our own vine and fig-tree, in conscious independence, and perhaps never think of the heroism of Washington; we enjoy the practical benefits of Franklin's great discoveries in science, possibly without even associating them with his venerable name; and yet Washington and Franklin, though

men of another generation, live in our freedom, our comforts, our enlarged views, and glorious prospects.

But while every man, especially every man of commanding talents or station, must, from the necessity of the case, outlive his own earthly existence in the influence which he exerts upon society, there is, perhaps, no channel through which one's influence can descend so visibly and certainly as that of authorship. Not that every man, who makes a book, thereby secures a claim to the remembrance, much less the gratitude, of posterity; for book-making is, unfortunately, a trade at which the majority of workmen are bunglers; and a large portion of the books that are printed, instead of descending either to bless or to curse future generations, seem to have fulfilled their mission in bearing a momentary testimony to the stupidity of their authors. But let an individual produce a work of sufficient importance to gain the character of a cosmopolite; a work that the world will read in spite of the critics, and that will just as certainly be read by posterity as that there shall be a posterity to read; and withal a work that is fitted to enlarge the views and improve the character of every one who reads it, and that individual will live in the future in a manner peculiar to himself; his very thoughts, in precisely the lan-

guage he chooses to express them, will become, to a great extent, the thoughts of each successive generation ; and his influence, hundreds of years after he is in his grave, may be just as direct and efficient as if he were still the living, speaking man, and had multiplied himself indefinitely, and diffused himself everywhere. The man who dies, leaving a great work behind him, has a representative on earth, which he need not fear to trust ; a representative in which his own spirit will have a living and glorious embodiment.

We do not say, that Dr. Dwight's influence as an author will actually be greater than as a teacher of youth and the head of a college ; for in this latter capacity he has made himself immediately felt in every department of public life ; and that influence is still operating, and must continue to operate, in the formation of other minds, and in everything connected with the best interests of our country and the world. But it is as an author that he will be most known and venerated hereafter. While his labors in other departments, though still exerting their influence, will be comparatively forgotten, the productions of his pen will remain, as a monument of his genius and a guard to his reputation.

Few men of his day, especially on this side

of the Atlantic, published so extensively ; for, though much the greater portion of his works was posthumous, they were all carefully prepared, and even underwent a critical revision by himself for the press. The whole of his published writings would be equal to at least thirteen or fourteen large octavo volumes.

That he should have produced so much, seems the more remarkable, in view of the fact, that, during the whole period, he had, as a student, scarcely any use of his eyes. And he not only read with the eyes, but wrote with the hand of another. Habit had rendered this latter exercise perfectly easy and pleasant to him. When there is so much correctness, and beauty, and we may say perfection of style, as his writings exhibit, it would seem, that there was little occasion for making allowance for them, in consideration of the manner in which they were produced ; and yet, perhaps, it is only just to say, from the analogy of experience, that the necessity created by this physical infirmity sometimes rendered his style more diffuse than it would otherwise have been. This seems to be almost the unavoidable effect of writing with a borrowed hand ; and it was only the habit of close and accurate thinking, that prevented its being realized in a greater degree, if, indeed, it was realized at all, in his case.



Besides the works separately published during his life, he contributed several important papers to different religious periodicals, particularly the *Panoplist* and the *Religious Intelligencer*. There was also a work printed anonymously, but generally attributed to his pen, entitled "A Review of a Review of Iniquin's Letters," published in the London Quarterly, designed as a castigation to John Bull, for his ungracious attacks upon the American character. It was characterized by great severity, though not at all disproportioned to the base misrepresentations and gross scurrility that called it forth.

It is understood that there are still several valuable works, written by him, which he designed for the press, but which have not yet seen the light. The most extensive and elaborate of these is a work on the character and writings of St. Paul, which would doubtless form an important addition to our theological literature. We doubt not that from his miscellaneous sermons there might be another selection, that would at once do honor to his memory, and confer blessings upon the world. It is to be hoped that his friends, who have these valuable manuscripts in possession, will, at no distant period, put them within the reach of the community at large.

The published works of President Dwight



may be divided into three distinct classes, the first poetical, the second theological, the third historical and miscellaneous.

He was extensively known, not only in his own country, but abroad, as a poet. Without claiming for him anything like the same distinction in this as in some other departments, we may safely say that his poetical productions were of no inferior character. His rich and glowing imagination supplied him with copious imagery, and his generally correct taste not unfrequently moulded it with great skill and effect. Some of his minor pieces particularly, both of a patriotic and sacred character, have been always admired, and will probably last as long as the language in which they are written.

His earliest as well as most elaborate and sustained effort, is the "Conquest of Canaan." This was begun when he was at the age of nineteen, and completed when he was but twenty-two. It was his intention to publish it about the commencement of the revolution, shortly after it was written; but the unsettled state of the country led him to defer it till the close of the war. It had an extensive circulation in this country, and was also favorably received in Great Britain. The design of the poem is obvious from its title. It brings out, with fine effect, a most interesting portion of sacred history, and

is well adapted to cherish the spirit of devotion and piety. It was dedicated to the father of his country.

The next of his poetical works was "The Triumph of Infidelity," which was published anonymously shortly after the appearance of his "Conquest of Canaan." It has for its introduction a short and pithy dedication to Voltaire, as if he had been yet alive; in which some wholesome truths are addressed to him for the benefit of his followers. It is dignified, but yet severe, and contains many allusions to individuals, some of which were doubtless better understood then than now. Most of them, however, are sufficiently obvious to those who have any knowledge of the history of the conflict, which Christianity sustained with infidelity at that period. The poem is full of keen satire, as well as stern truth and sound philosophy. It was fitted to render important service to the cause of Christianity, at a time when the most formidable influence was arrayed against it.

His "Greenfield Hill" took its name from the place of his residence, and was written during the period that he resided there. It consists of seven parts, each part embracing a distinct theme; and yet the whole bearing harmoniously upon one grand design. Its descriptions of surrounding scenery, of the desolations which war

had recently occasioned in the neighborhood, and of the future glory of this land as it opens upon the eye of the patriot, are characterized by great vividness of conception, and sometimes by superlative beauty and magnificence. The work throughout exhibits the lofty breathings of a patriotic spirit.

About the commencement of this century, he was requested by the General Association of Connecticut to revise Watts's edition of the Psalms, and also to prepare a selection of hymns suitable for the purposes of public worship. This task he performed with good judgment and taste, selecting from various authors, and supplying some of the best portions of the work from his own pen. This book not only received the warm approbation of the body at whose request it was prepared, but it was also approved and recommended by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church. It was extensively used, not only in the Congregational churches of New England, but in the Presbyterian churches of the Middle and Southern States, for many years, and has by no means entirely gone into disuse at the present day.

President Dwight's theological productions admit of a natural subdivision into two classes, his miscellaneous discourses, and his *System of Theology*.

About half of his miscellaneous discourses was published, in pamphlet form, during his life. They were preached on various occasions of greater or less interest, and had the advantage of being prepared under the impulse which an occasion generally imparts. No doubt they possess different degrees of excellence; but it is confidently believed, that it would not be easy to find an equal number of occasional sermons, from one individual, of a higher degree of merit. The sermon on "The Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament" is one of the most condensed and effective arguments on that subject to be found in the language. The two sermons on "The Danger of Infidel Philosophy" are alike distinguished for argument and eloquence, for learning and piety. The sermon on "The True Means of establishing Public Happiness" is characterized by the most sustained and vigorous thought, in connection with the loftiest patriotism. The sermon on "Duelling" appeals, with almost matchless beauty and fervor, to every principle of human nature that can be enlisted against this murderous practice. The sermon on "The Dignity and Excellence of the Gospel," preached at the ordination of the Reverend N. W. Taylor, has been justly regarded as one of his finest efforts. It was preached originally at another ordination, and in



a somewhat different and less perfect form ; and a copy of it in manuscript, by some means unknown to the author, found its way into the hands of the poet Cowper, who read it with great delight, and expressed concerning it the warmest approbation. On hearing of it, the author is said to have been mortified that so imperfect a discourse should have represented him to such a mind, and shortly after re-wrote it in the form in which it was subsequently preached and given to the public.

The two volumes of miscellaneous discourses, that have been published since his death, consist of sermons that were preached, partly on taking leave of his classes at the close of their collegiate course, and partly on ordinary occasions of public worship on the Sabbath. They are all deeply fraught with momentous truth, and abound in forcible reasoning, striking illustration, and eloquent appeals.

His System of Theology is doubtless to be regarded as his *chef-d'œuvre*; the work upon which, more than any other, his reputation will depend. Every one knows that it has become a standard work not only in this country, but in Great Britain; indeed, it is probably quite as highly estimated, and, owing to the reduced price at which it is furnished, far more exten-



sively circulated in Great Britain than among ourselves. The general views of Christianity which it maintains have already been alluded to; they are Calvinistic, but not Calvinistic of the very highest order. The peculiar views held by Dr. Hopkins and others of the same school, Dr. Dwight, though disposed in early life to adopt, ultimately and on mature reflection rejected; while, on the other hand, his views of the transmission of human guilt from the father of our race to his posterity were not fully in accordance with the commonly received doctrine of Calvinists. Of course, different schools in theology, and different denominations, will not all regard his theological views alike; but all will agree that he has defended them with great dignity and ability; and probably a larger portion of those who are called Orthodox will meet on the ground of his system, than on that of any other. No one can read this work without being struck with its philosophical arrangement, its luminous reasonings, its bold and lofty eloquence, and the ability which it evinces to employ different faculties with the best effect, and to do everything in an exceedingly graceful and perfect manner.

The third class of his writings is of somewhat a varied character, and consists of his

"Travels," and a few other things of a kindred stamp. His "Travels," the most voluminous of his works, next to his Theology, contains an amount of historical, biographical, topographical matter, concerning the parts of the country to which it relates, that cannot be found in any other single publication. It is the record of a most diligent course of observation and research, continued through a long series of years. It is quite possible, that, in some instances, he may have been betrayed into mistakes by his informers; but, even if much more allowance were made for this than ought to be, the work would still hold a high place in the department to which it belongs. It is alike instructive and entertaining, full of interesting incident and valuable information.

Such is a rapid estimate of the productions of his pen, so far as it may be supposed to come within the province of a biographer. These productions constitute a noble monument of his talents and his industry. Happy the man who can thus perpetuate his existence on earth, while he has a nobler existence in heaven!

## CHAPTER X.

*General Estimate of his Character.*

HAVING, in the preceding chapters, exhibited President Dwight's character somewhat in detail, it may not be amiss to conclude this sketch with a rapid glance at a few of his more general characteristics, which are obviously deducible from the statements already made. In order to get the full effect of a picture, we contemplate it in the general as well as in detail; and so, in order to form an adequate estimate of an individual's life and character, we should not only contemplate, separately, the various qualities or actions which make up the one or the other, but we should look at the whole, as they are grouped together, thus forming the veritable man.

He was an eminently *active* man. A life of indolent ease never had any attractions for him. No matter in what circumstances he might be placed, it was impossible that the activity of his mind should ever be repressed. He labored in different vocations, and yet seemed to labor with as much facility and effect in each, as if each had been his exclusive field. The great business of his life consisted

in preaching the gospel and instructing youth, but, beside this, he was occupied as a legislator and a farmer, and occasionally lent an active influence in almost every department. It is scarcely necessary to add, that, while his life was characterized by activity, his activity was characterized by the utmost system. Nothing in the economy of his life seemed to be left to accident. He always knew what he had to perform, and addressed himself to each particular duty with as much directness of purpose, and as much concentrated energy of mind, as if no other duty would ever claim his attention. Here lay the great secret of his accomplishing so much. Even the same amount of activity, subject to a mere random influence, and exerted independently of all regard to system, would have been comparatively unavailing.

With such an amount of well-directed activity, it follows, of course, that his life was one of extraordinary *usefulness*. The amount of what he accomplished for his generation and posterity, no mind can fully estimate. His general influence on society, in moulding its institutions, in correcting its errors, in giving a right tone to public opinion, has imposed upon our country a mighty debt of gratitude. As a civilian, he rendered most acceptable service to the state, at a period when wisdom in counsel



and firmness of purpose were especially needed. As a guardian and teacher of youth, few men have done so much to form the character of the next age, and to aid the general cause of human improvement. As a minister of the gospel, he shed forth a glorious light, in which multitudes were led, and quickened, and trained for heaven. As an author, his influence is felt, and is destined always to be felt, wherever the English language is read; not to say that some of his works may yet, in all probability, be translated into foreign languages. He labored in various spheres, and in all to good purpose; wherever he moved, the monuments of his activity remain to bless the world.

And as his life was eminently characterized by beneficence, so it was also an eminently *honored* life. It often happens that great and good men, in the course of their lives, perform some indiscreet or rash act, that contributes to lessen their usefulness, and detract from their fame; but Dr. Dwight was happily exempted from such a calamity. Though he had infirmities in common with the race, yet even the finger of calumny could never point at any important action of his life, that his friends need desire should be blotted from his history. His whole course, from the time that he appeared on the stage of public action, was marked by the most



decided expressions of public favor. As a legislator, his influence was considered so important, that some of the ablest and best men of the state in which he lived made an earnest effort to detain him permanently in civil life. As a chaplain, he enjoyed the high confidence and respect of the greatest spirits in the army; and the very greatest of all gave him his cordial friendship. As a preacher, he was, and still is, regarded as among the first that have ever adorned our American pulpit. As a man of general intelligence and distinguished reputation, his acquaintance was sought by the most enlightened men from various parts of the world.

If any great and difficult enterprise was to be attempted, either in church or state, his opinion was almost sure to be asked, and his judgment was always regarded as worthy of the highest consideration. He received from two of our first literary institutions the highest honors they had to bestow; Princeton College conferred upon him the degree of doctor of divinity in 1787, and Harvard University the degree of doctor of laws in 1810.

The wide circulation of his works, especially his *System of Theology*, in Great Britain, is evidence enough of the manner in which he is regarded by the great and good of the old world. Even in Scotland, where the prevailing

theological views differ, by some slight shades, from those which he held, this work is nevertheless regarded with great favor, and is scarcely exceeded in the extent of its circulation by any of their own publications. Not to mention any other particular testimony, we remember well to have heard Robert Hall, a most competent judge, speak with admiration of this work, as one of the most important contributions which have been made to the science of theology in modern times.

And, last of all, he was an eminently *happy* man. He had a fine, cheerful temperament; and, though naturally possessed of strong feelings, which, unrestrained, would have been a source of great unhappiness, yet, by a rigid self-discipline, he had acquired such control of them, that he never felt the evils incident to excessive indulgence. He was formed for a high degree of social enjoyment; no man was more happy than he in the bosom of his family, or in the society of his friends. And he knew how to derive gratification from everything; his ear was exquisitely attuned to music; and his imagination and taste gathered materials for enjoyment from the whole field of nature. And, while his original constitution was well adapted to render him happy, he was also uncommonly favored in

respect to the arrangements of Providence. He enjoyed almost uninterrupted health, his sight being the only faculty that was in any degree impaired. He was highly favored in respect to his domestic connections; belonging to one of the most respectable families in New England, and being the centre of a circle of most endeared and devoted relatives. He occupied stations of the highest respectability, in which there was full play for his noble powers and generous sensibilities. He enjoyed the full confidence, not only of the community in which he lived, but of the greatest and best men of his age. And, last and best, his spirit had acquired an upward tendency; he lived amidst the realities of the great and glorious future; the hopes of Christianity enabled him to resign anything, even his own spirit, with quiet submission; and the history of his death is written in one bright line; "The end of that man is peace."

If there is one lesson which the preceding sketch teaches more impressively than any other, it is one that was often inculcated both by his lips and his pen; namely, that great intellectual and moral excellence is never attained without great effort. With the fine powers which his Creator gave him, without exertion he would have been nothing better than a cumberer of the ground. The noble growth to which his faculties

attained; the wonderful amount of knowledge which he acquired; the various and important services which he rendered to his country and his race; all, all, are to be referred, under God, to an early formed habit of well-directed mental activity. Let every young man study his character, especially this feature of it, and feel assured that he has no conception what he can do, till the result of an experiment shall reveal it to him. If he imagines himself deficient in intellectual endowments, let him remember that diligence can do much to supply that deficiency, and elevate him, at least, to respectability and usefulness. If he imagines that he is one of the most favored, in respect to natural gifts, and that this supersedes the necessity of vigorous effort in order to be great, let him know that he is in the way to insignificance and contempt; for he has only to reduce his theory to practice, to become a miserable drone.

## APPENDIX

---

### *List of President Dwight's Writings.*

1. A Dissertation on the History, Eloquence, and Poetry of the Bible, delivered at the public Commencement at New Haven, 1772.
2. A Sermon, preached at Stamford, in Connecticut, upon the General Thanksgiving. December 18th, 1777.
3. A Sermon, preached at Northampton, on the 28th November, 1781, occasioned by the Capture of the British Army under the Command of Earl Cornwallis.
4. The Conquest of Canaan; a Poem, in Eleven Books. 1785.
5. The Triumph of Infidelity; a Poem, printed in the "World." 1788.
6. Virtuous Rulers a national Blessing; a Sermon. preached at the General Election, May 12th, 1791.
7. A Discourse on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the New Testament; delivered at New Haven, September 10th, 1793, at the annual Lecture appointed by the General Association of Connecticut, on the Tuesday before the public Commencement.
8. Greenfield Hill; a Poem, in Seven Parts 1794.



9. The True Means of establishing Public Happiness; a Sermon delivered on the 7th July, 1795, before the Connecticut Society of Cincinnati.

10. The Nature and Danger of infidel Philosophy, exhibited in two Discourses, addressed to the Candidates for the Baccalaureate in Yale College, September 9th, 1797.

11. A Discourse preached at the Funeral of the Reverend Elizur Goodrich, D. D., Pastor of the Church in Durham, and one of the Members of the Corporation of Yale College, November 25th, 1797.

12. The Duty of Americans at the present Crisis, illustrated in a Discourse preached on the 4th of July, 1798, at the Request of the Citizens of New Haven.

13. A Discourse delivered at New Haven, February 22d, 1800, on the Character of George Washington, at the Request of the Citizens.

14. A Discourse on some Events of the last Century, delivered in the Brick Church in New Haven, on Wednesday, January 7th, 1801.

15. A Sermon on the Death of Mr. Ebenezer Grant Marsh, senior Tutor and Professor elect of Languages and Ecclesiastical History in Yale College, who died November 16th, 1803, in the 27th Year of his Age; preached in the Brick Church in New Haven, November 20th.

16. A Sermon on Duelling, preached in the Chapel of Yale College, New Haven, September 9th, 1804, and the old Presbyterian Church in New York, January 21st, 1805.

17. A Sermon preached at the Opening of the Theological Institution in Andover, and at the Ordination of Reverend Eliphalet Pearson, D. D., September 28th, 1808.

18. A Discourse occasioned by the Death of His Excellency Jonathan Trumbull, Governor of the State of Connecticut, and delivered at the Request of the General Assembly, in the Brick Church in New Haven, 1809.

19. The Charitable blessed; a Sermon preached in the First Church in New Haven, August 8th, 1810.

20. A Statistical Account of the City of New Haven. 1811.

21. The Dignity and Excellence of the Gospel, illustrated in a Discourse delivered April 8th, 1812, at the Ordination of the Reverend N. W. Taylor, as Pastor of the First Church and Congregation in New Haven.

22. A Discourse, in Two Parts, delivered July 23d, 1812, on the Public Fast, in the Chapel of Yale College.

23. A Discourse, in Two Parts, delivered August 20th, 1812, on the National Fast, in the Chapel of Yale College.

24. A Sermon, delivered in Boston, September 16th, 1813, before the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, at their Fourth Annual Meeting.

25. Observations on Language, and on Light, published in the Memoirs of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The following have been published since his death.

26. Theology explained and defended, in a Series of Sermons. With a Memoir of the Author's Life. In 5 volumes, 8vo.

27. Travels in New England and New York. In 4 volumes, 8vo.

28. Sermons on Miscellaneous Subjects. 2 volumes, 8vo.

**L I F E**  
**OF**  
**C O U N T ' P U L A S K I ;**  
**BY**  
**J A R E D S P A R K S .**

... of the ...  
... of the ...  
... of the ...

... of the ...  
... of the ...  
... of the ...

THE

THE HISTORY OF THE

THE HISTORY OF THE



## PREFACE.

---

THE materials for the following memoir, in the part relating to events in Poland, have been drawn chiefly from *Rulhière's Histoire de l'Anarchie de Pologne*, a work of authority, and of uncommon ability and eloquence. As an historical composition, it possesses very great merit. The author had the best opportunity for collecting his facts, and verifying their accuracy, since he had access to all the documents on the subject in the French archives, as well as a personal acquaintance with some of the principal actors in the scenes which he describes. In addition to this work, the *Histoire des Révolutions de Pologne*, by the Abbé Joubert, has also been consulted.

For the particulars in the life of Pulaski after he came to America, I have depended, for the most part, on his manuscript correspondence with the President of Congress, with General Washington, and other general officers of the continental army. . A pamphlet, entitled *Pulaski Vindicated*,

written by Colonel Bentalou, an officer in Pulaski's legion, has also furnished some interesting facts; the more valuable and authentic as coming from one, who was intimately connected with him during the whole of his brief career in the war of the American revolution.

## COUNT PULASKI.

---

No event in history has been regarded with so much astonishment and indignation, by all men possessing the common feelings of humanity and sense of justice, as the dismemberment of Poland. A country of ancient renown, one fifth larger than France, and containing twenty millions of people, has been ravaged, plundered, divided, subdued, and its political existence annihilated, by the treachery and cupidity of its three formidable neighbors, Russia, Austria, and Prussia. In the annals of mankind there is not a more revolting chapter, than that in which are recorded the particulars of this conspiracy against the rights of men, this league of infamy between the strong to crush the weak and devour their substance. The dark picture of selfishness, rapacity, and violence, is not relieved by a single spot of redeeming light.

To Russia belongs the odious preëminence of taking the lead in this career of crime. Poland

had lost her King. A new sovereign was to be chosen according to the usages sanctioned by the constitution. The Diet, consisting of deputies from the several provinces, commissioned to execute this solemn office, was assembled on the great plain near Warsaw. Meantime, the Empress of Russia, seizing this opportunity when the country was without a political head, marched troops into Poland, and ordered an army to be stationed in the vicinity of the electoral Diet, thus prepared and determined to overawe the deputies, and procure their suffrages for a favorite of her own. Poniatowsky was elected, and crowned King of Poland, with the name of Stanislaus Augustus.

This outrage kindled the keen resentment of all the patriotic Poles. Whether Poniatowsky would have been the object of their free choice or not, he must now be the creature of Russia. Events soon verified their most gloomy apprehensions. The army was not withdrawn; Repnin, the Russian ambassador, was dictator in Warsaw; and the King was little else than an instrument in his hands to execute the will of his despotic mistress. The legislative Diet was assembled, and the influence of the Russian cabinet, backed by a military force, ruled in the majority. Laws were passed, subversive of the ancient customs, which were disapproved by

the mass of the nation. Exasperated by these and other atrocious acts of foreign aggression, it is no wonder that many of the nobility, in all parts of Poland, should resort to measures, which every man who loves his country and values its independence will adopt under similar circumstances. They resolved to take up arms, and drive the invaders from the soil, which they had inherited from their ancestors, and which was their own by every principle of justice, and by every right recognized in the codes of civilized nations.

Then followed a train of remarkable events, during four years of desperate and bloody conflicts, which cannot be here narrated. Suffice it to say, that, if the boldest efforts of individual courage, and the sacrifices, endurance, and resolution of large communities, could have availed in so noble a cause, Poland would have been saved, and her liberties restored. Unhappily, she was doomed to a different destiny. The elements of union were wanting; the seeds of discord were thickly sown; and the constitution, venerable at least for its antiquity, but extremely ill contrived, and without central vigor, was wholly unsuited to such a crisis. The nobles, powerful in their wealth, rank, and the number of vassals attached to them, allowed every high purpose and bold enterprise to be baffled by



rivalries and dissensions among themselves; the natural fruit of their social and political state. A passion for genuine liberty animated the breast of many a patriotic Pole; but the same spirit did not breathe from the heart and soul of the nation, nor move the whole people with a simultaneous impulse. Daring exploits were achieved, and great acts were performed; but their effects were destroyed by disunion, which was perhaps rendered inevitable by the inherent vices of the constitution. Among those, who were the foremost to rally for their country's rescue, was the family of Pulaski.

The subject of this memoir, COUNT CASIMIR PULASKI, was born in 1747. His father, who was in the class of the nobility, had applied himself, with unusual assiduity, to the study of the laws, and was regarded as one of the ablest jurists in Poland. He was the staroste, or chief magistrate, of Warech, and stood high in public esteem as a man of ability and character. His alliances of friendship and intercourse were with the first families, and particularly the princely house of Czartorinsky. Till the breaking out of the troubles caused by the election of Poniatowsky, he had meddled little in political affairs, but had fulfilled with dignity the duties of private life, and especially such as he had been called to discharge by his profound knowl-

edge of jurisprudence. At this crisis, however, when he perceived the liberties of his country sinking and verging to ruin under the weight of a foreign power, and the King and chief rulers of the nation reduced to the humility of submitting to the imperious dictation of that power, he suddenly exhibited traits of character, a force of purpose and energy of will, which had before been unsuspected by his countrymen, and perhaps even by himself.

Confederations had already been formed in different parts of the kingdom by those called Dissidents; but Russian influence had contrived to divert them all, by intrigue or violence, to its own pernicious designs of destroying the authority of the King, and substituting that of the Empress in its stead. These combinations were at first countenanced by the staroste of Warech, with the hope that their genuine object of restoring the rights of the people might be attained. Disappointed in this hope, and deceived in the confidence he had given to some of the leaders, he withdrew himself at once from these treacherous connections, and formed the grand scheme of combining the true friends of their country throughout Poland in an armed opposition to the enemies of her independence and freedom. He was confident, that, if the voice of the nation could be made to declare

itself, it would everywhere be in unison with his own ardent wishes; and he believed that a rallying point only was wanted to rouse the national spirit of the Poles, and to unite them in defending so just and glorious a cause.

He was at this time in Warsaw, and he communicated his designs to his intimate friends among the more distinguished of the nobility. They all approved the scheme in the abstract, but were timid and hesitating as to its practicability, or the expediency of attempting to put it in execution. If it failed, their estates would be endangered; if it succeeded, their means would be exhausted; for money and supplies, as well as stout and willing hearts, must be provided. They refused to join him openly, but they kept his secret. Some of them did more. They gave him bills of credit on their stewards, and orders to raise troops on their domains. They also signed a guaranty to the Turkish government for a loan of one hundred thousand ducats, which had been promised if such a guaranty could be obtained. It is obvious, that the Ottoman court could not but view with extreme jealousy these unrighteous attempts of Russia to strengthen her already colossal power. On this occasion, indeed, the Turks were the natural allies of the Poles; and the wonder is, that they did not confirm and

sustain this alliance by more steady and substantial aids.

A new Diet was about to be convened, and a large part of the Russian army, hitherto scattered over the country, was ordered to Warsaw, to control the voice of that assembly. Pulaski deemed this a fitting time to begin operations. It was his plan to form a confederation, and raise the standard, at some point remote from the capital, and beyond the immediate reach of the Russian forces. He associated with him Krasinski, a chief of military renown, brother to the Bishop of Kaminiak, who was a man of high rank and character in the state. They left Warsaw separately, and were to meet at the city of Leopold, in the southern part of the kingdom.

Pulaski went first to one of his estates, a few leagues from the capital, where he confided his project to his three sons and a nephew. They were all young, scarcely beyond the verge of manhood. He described to them, in fervid language, the glory of achieving the freedom of their country; but he did not conceal the hazards of the enterprise, nor the reproaches and ingratitude that await the unfortunate avengers of humanity. It was not surprising that the votive spirit of the father should awaken a kindred response in the bosom of the sons.

In their glowing imaginations, the future teemed only with scenes of victory and success. The two eldest, Francis and Casimir, were sent in advance; the former, to visit the gentlemen of the country, and explain to them his father's designs; the latter, to assemble a hundred and fifty Cossacks on the family estates, and lead them to the place of rendezvous. Bidding a last adieu to his wife, Pulaski followed with his youngest son and nephew, and found Krasinski in the city of Leopold.

This place was selected, because it was in the heart of a rich country, and surrounded by the estates of many nobles who were known to be friendly to the cause. Their plan was aided, also, by favorable letters from the archbishop of the city. Their reception was such as to gratify their fondest hopes. Even the women were carried to so high a pitch of enthusiasm, that some of them pledged their jewels to raise money for augmenting the slender funds of the grand enterprise. These beginnings were, of course, kept as secret as possible, and confined to a few. But they could not wholly escape suspicion. The commander of the city was in the interest of the King, and consequently of the Russian party, and he watched the motions of Pulaski and Krasinski with a careful eye. Prudence coun-



sedled them to seek another place of rendezvous. They retired to Barr, a small town in Podolia, about twenty miles from the Turkish frontier. Here assembled the first confederates, to the number of eight persons, on the 29th of February, 1768. More than three hundred gentlemen in that part of the country had agreed to join them. A secret compact was drawn up and signed by Pulaski, his three sons and nephew, Krasinski, and two others; and this was the celebrated Confederation of Barr, the model of all the others that sprang up in different parts of Poland during the four subsequent years.

At the same time, an act was published, in the form of a manifest, eloquently written, and explaining the reasons of their conduct. They complained that the Empress, by determining to guaranty the perpetuity of the new laws passed under her influence, had taken away from Poland the right of legislation. They called the whole world to witness the indispensable obligation by which they were bound to repel, in every manner, even by force of arms, an aggression which would impose a foreign yoke on a free and independent nation. Krasinski was named marshal of the confederation, and Pulaski marshal of the troops. These two leaders

had collected a little band of three hundred armed followers, one half of whom had been drawn from the estates of Pulaski. The other confederates were true to their pledges. This part of Poland had been long exposed to the incursions of hordes of banditti from the borders of the Black Sea. To protect their houses and lands from the insults and ravages of these brigands, the proprietors were obliged to keep bodies of men under arms. A ready resource was thus opened for gaining recruits to the army of the confederates, which was augmented in a short time to a respectable force. They also purchased of a Tartar chief the privilege of enrolling some of his dependants among their numbers.

At a short distance from Barr was the monastery of Berdichef, long renowned for the wonderful miracles believed to have been performed there, and for the extraordinary sanctity of the monks. The pious bounty of innumerable pilgrims had filled it with treasures; and to guard these treasures it was surrounded by a strong fortification. The monastery, and a town adjoining it, espoused the cause of the confederates. Father Mark, whose fame had spread far and wide in those regions, a man of austere manners and ardent imagination, threw

the weight of his influence into their scale. At the head of the monks and devotees, he marched about the country with a cross, and banners flying, and preached up the confederation as a new crusade. He finally established himself at Barr, where multitudes gathered around his standard to receive his benediction.

These movements were too conspicuous not to be soon known in the capital. Orders were sent by the King to some of the principal gentlemen in Podalia, requiring them to quell the disturbances; but they joined the confederates, and in a short time the army amounted to eight thousand men. The confederates now became more bold, and published a circular address, calling on the whole country to rise in arms, demanding an assembly of the nobles to consult on the affairs of the nation; appealing to the patriotism of their countrymen, and urging them to postpone every other consideration to that of resisting the tyranny of their enemies, and maintaining their national rights.

The increasing numbers of the confederates alarmed the King and his ministers at Warsaw. The Russian ambassador said, that the troops under his direction were ordered to act on the defensive, and not to attack the Poles. A party in the senate proposed to solicit the active support of the Empress, but a patriotic majority re-

fused their assent to this proposal. Meantime Repnin, the ambassador, ordered several detachments of troops into Podalia, with instructions to watch the confederates, embarrass their operations, and cut off their intercourse with the surrounding country. Within a few weeks, a cordon was thus drawn around the little army stationed at Barr, and along the Turkish frontier. Skirmishes between advanced parties became inevitable. In this posture of affairs, Pulaski assembled his troops, and addressed them as follows.

“At length, brave countrymen, the perfidious allies of Poland have become her declared enemies. For sixty years a concealed war, more dangerous than bloody hostilities, has enfeebled and desolated our unfortunate country. An execrable people, who can neither be disarmed by justice, mollified by submission, touched by favors, nor surfeited by pillage, has resolved to impose upon us the yoke of slavery. Virtues the most sacred have passed for crimes in the eyes of our oppressors; and virtuous citizens, our fathers and our exemplars, now drag out a wretched existence in the dungeons of that barbarous nation. If ever men had a duty to perform, it is that which has compelled us to take up arms. Our republic is invaded, religion outraged, the justice which was promised



to us has been converted into a snare, the rights of nations have been trodden under foot, our senators are in chains. Nations the most servile, who should be the objects of such insults and outrages, even from a legitimate sovereign, would not be so tame as to submit. The whole universe would applaud their rebellion; and the oppressions of which we complain would justify a revolt under the most despotic government. Brave confederates! Poland does not want courageous citizens prepared to sacrifice their lives for her deliverance. It is not blind despair which impels us onward, but a firm resolution, a well-founded hope, a noble sentiment, the love of country and freedom, of humanity and justice."

By these and similar expressions he endeavored to rouse their indignation and animate their hopes. The senate at Warsaw at first thought to try the effect of negotiation. The mission was intrusted to Mokranowski, a nobleman of high rank and character. Pulaski replied to his letter, that all negotiation was suspicious, that perfidy contaminated everything which proceeded from Russian counsels. "It is not enough," said he, "to have observed that the language of this nation has no word to express honor; it is necessary to add, that it has many which give a favorable meaning to falsehood and fraud."



Hostilities were suspended during this negotiation; but, whilst it was going on, new orders came from the Empress. She declared the confederates enemies to her empire, and rebels against their own country. She threatened devastation and ruin to all parts of the country, which should lend support to the confederates; nor was it a vain menace. Seven regiments of regular troops and five thousand Cossacks marched through some of the provinces, marking their course with fire and blood, ravage and slaughter, burning villages and detached houses, putting to the sword wandering families and fugitives, whom they encountered in the way, flying to escape an indiscriminate carnage.

The confederates were engaged in combats on every side. In the midst of a battle it was told to Pulaski, that his three sons had been killed. "I am sure they have done their duty," was his answer; and he continued to give orders with his usual coolness. The report was false. On the contrary, it was in these first combats that young Casimir Pulaski, then twenty-one years o.d., exhibited proofs of the military genius which soon rendered him so celebrated and formidable. Though young, he was not entirely without experience. He had been in the service of Duke Charles of Courland, and was in the Castle of Mittau, when that city was besieged

by fifteen thousand Russians. For six months he had witnessed the evolutions and discipline of that army. But his own talents and bravery were his chief resource. On the present occasion, the post he defended with twelve hundred confederates was attacked during seven days, at first by an equal number, then by two thousand men, and at last by six thousand. He constantly sustained himself, and gained frequent advantages.

Among the numerous confederations that started up in the southern provinces of Poland was one, at the head of which was Count Potocki, an ambitious nobleman, who aspired to the command of all the confederations. He demanded this rank from the confederates at Barr. They hesitated, because they had from the beginning doubted the policy of putting their cause into the hands of any of the highest families, whose alliances and former attachments naturally inclined them to support the royal authority. But Pulaski, with an honorable frankness and generosity, silenced their fears, and prevailed on them to bestow on Potocki the rank he desired. The event is memorable only as being the origin of troubles among the confederates. Potocki was jealous of the growing reputation of the Pulaskis, and he scattered suspicions of their fidelity in the public ear. His narrow soul could not

brook that any one should divide with him the glory of saving his country, and to his jaundiced vision every distinguished compatriot in arms presented the form of a rival. He was not deficient in courage or activity. He collected fifteen hundred men, and fought bravely, till at length he was beaten, his troops dispersed, and himself driven across the Niester, where he sought protection from the Hospodar of Moldavia. When he returned, he was seized with a dangerous malady, which kept him some time from the field.

The confederates were everywhere pursued with relentless ferocity by their foes. Pulaski maintained his ground as long as he could against so unequal a force, till he was compelled, in his turn, to cross the Niester, and find a refuge in the Turkish dominions. At this time the Russians laid siege to the town of Barr. The fortifications were weak, and the conquest was easy. Father Mark, in a fit of enthusiasm, mounted the rampart, and made the sign of the cross. At that moment, one of the enemy's cannon burst. The besieged regarded it as a miracle. Encouraged by this success, he marched out with a company of priests, dressed in surplices and carrying images, and advanced boldly towards the assailants. They were driven back with great slaughter. The town was taken by

storm, and two hundred confederates were made prisoners.

Casimir Pulaski took post in the monastery of Berdichef, with three hundred men. Here he was able to sustain a siege for several weeks. The succors which he expected were cut off, his provisions failed, and he at last capitulated on honorable terms. He and all his men were to be allowed their liberty. The pledge was violated in regard to himself. He was detained for some time, and was finally liberated on condition that he would bear proposals for a reconciliation to the chiefs of the confederates. He departed, and joined his father in Moldavia, writing to the Russian ambassador, at the same time, that he should pay no respect to a parole, which had been extorted from him by fraud and violence; that he should not advise his father, or any of the confederates, to lay down their arms, and should feel bound to fight the Russians wherever he could find them.

Nor was an opportunity long deferred. Putting himself at the head of a few troops, who had followed his father, he recrossed the Nies-ter, took a long circuit, fell upon a detachment of Russians, whom he attacked and beat, collected forage, levied contributions, and returned to camp, bringing with him prisoners, provisions, and military equipments. A second



incursion was even more successful and fortunate. He established and fortified an advantageous post within the Polish borders, where his father joined him, and they made themselves masters of a large space of country, and prepared magazines for the subsistence of an army. Soon afterwards, the father was treacherously betrayed. A Tartar chief, whose fidelity he had no reason to suspect, invited him to an interview at his residence, for the purpose, as he said, of reconciling the divisions that reigned among the confederates. He accepted the invitation; but news soon came that he was confined and closely guarded. In a letter to his sons, he besought them to have no uneasiness on his account, but, whatever might be his destiny, to sacrifice their resentments, to think only of their country, and to justify his memory by their conduct.

No explanation of this perfidy is given. Suspicion fell upon Potocki. The bitter root of jealousy, which the father's fame had nourished in his bosom, received new aliment from the rising merit of the sons. Casimir's release from the Russians, with a proposal of reconciliation, was turned to his disadvantage, and represented as a proof of his wavering patriotism or foreign attachments. Time confuted these aspersions, but not till they had produced, to some extent, their malevolent effects.



But the three brothers, adhering to their father's counsels, resolved to subdue the malice of their enemies by devotion to their country. At the head of eight hundred men they maintained two posts during the winter, on the banks of the Niester. A war between Russia and Turkey was now inevitable, and they hoped to facilitate the passage of a Turkish army across the river for the deliverance of Poland. For this purpose they amassed provisions and other supplies. Their hopes were defeated, however, by the movements of the Russian army, early in the spring of 1769. A formidable force approached the Niester, and the chances of war threw the youngest brother into the hands of the enemy. He was sent a prisoner to Kasan, a town in the interior of Russia.

The post occupied by Casimir Pulaski was the ancient fortress of Okopé, where, for a century past, there had existed only the ruins of the old fortifications. The place was strong by nature, situate on a rocky eminence, which, on one side, rose almost perpendicularly from the margin of the Niester. On two other sides it was washed by a deep river bordered by an impassable morass. At the top was a plain of nearly a mile in extent, which terminated in one direction by a gentle slope, reaching to the plains below. This slope afforded the only access to

the summit, and Casimir caused redoubts to be thrown up for its defence. At this place he determined to collect military stores, and he was the more confident of his ability to maintain it, as succors could easily be thrown into it by the Turks.

At a short distance below was the passage across the Niester most frequented between Poland and Moldavia. Here stood the little village of Zwaniek, nearly opposite to Choczim, a Turkish fortress on the other side. For the defence of this passage the Poles had long before erected a fortress, encompassed by a moat, and situate on a hill, which commanded both banks of the river. This post was occupied by Francis Pulaski. When the first intelligence of the approach of the Russians arrived, he crossed the river to Choczim, and demanded support from the Turkish Bashaw, representing to him the extreme importance of these two posts, which defended the passage of the river, and contained the magazines that he and his brother had established.

Meantime the Russians, having taken possession of Zwaniek, attacked the fortress of Okopé. The redoubts were defended with great spirit till night, when the assailants set fire to the village of Zwaniek, and continued the assault by the light of the flames. That he might see

his enemy, Pulaski likewise set fire to the houses and barracks within the redoubts. Amidst the dread magnificence of a scene like this, they continued the conflict till the Poles, deceived in their hope of succors, were overpowered by numbers, after the battle had raged for several hours. Pulaski and two hundred of his horsemen retreated to the little plain at the top of the hill, shielded by darkness from the pursuit of their enemies. Encompassed by frightful precipices on one side, by a river, with an impassable marsh, on the other, and by Russian bayonets in their rear, the only alternative that seemed to await them was captivity or death. While despair was brooding in every bosom, Pulaski called out to his men, "Follow me in silence." He then turned his horse's head towards the river, and advanced to the brow of the precipice.

He recollected a narrow, dangerous foot-path, that led down among the rocks to the plain below. Dismounting from his horse, and leading him by the bridle, he entered this almost hopeless passage. The others followed one by one. The murmuring sound of the river, then charged with floating masses of ice, prevented their movements at first from being heard by the enemy; but when some of the horses and men, losing their foothold, tumbled over the

precipice into the water, the noise of their fall, increased by their cries, came to the ears of the Russians. They imagined the Turks were assembling on the opposite bank of the river, and they fired cannon from the ramparts. The balls passed over the heads of the daring fugitives, who at length found themselves in a safe path. But here a new danger was to be encountered. A body of Russians had been stationed in reserve at the foot of the hill, and these troops must be passed. The Poles formed themselves into a column, and galloped rapidly forward, raising the cry which the Turks were known to raise when they rush into battle. The astonished Russians believed, for the moment, that an army of Turks or Tartars had crossed the river, and was coming down upon them; and, before the confusion had subsided, Pulaski and his companions were beyond their reach.

The Bashaw of Choczim would not listen to the solicitations of Francis Pulaski; but forty Janizaries, smitten with the courage of the two brothers, voluntarily accompanied him back to the castle of Zwaniek. Joined with the Poles, they made an impetuous sortie; but it served little other purpose than to favor the retreat of Francis, who, withdrawing to a small village near Choczim, abandoned a post which could no longer be defended, and which was now useless



without the coöperation of the Turks. A report was soon after brought to Casimir that his brother was killed.

The war now extended throughout the southern and eastern parts of Poland. The Russian troops, united to those of the King, overran the country, leaving in their train terrible marks of devastation, ruin, and blood. With them it was scarcely less than a war of extermination. Yet the confederates were not dismayed. Their resentments were sharpened by these atrocious acts of barbarism and cruelty upon a people, who claimed nothing but the quiet enjoyment of their homes, their ancient freedom, their inborn rights. Many a brave patriot seized the sword to avenge his country's wrongs, to rescue it from the iron tyranny of a detested foreign invader. Many poured out their blood like water in so righteous a cause; and left examples of a glorious martyrdom to their sons, and to men in all ages, who are thus goaded to despair by the barbed rod of an inhuman and bloodthirsty despotism.

"But," says Ruhlière, "the name which soon eclipsed all others, and which became one of the surest hopes of the nation, when the multiplied faults of the Turks no longer permitted them to lend succors to the Poles, was that of young Casimir Pulaski, always full of resources in misfortune, and of activity in success. After his



daring flight from the summit of Okopé, he collected the scattered fragments of the confederate troops, and, by an extraordinary combination of address and courage, he escaped from the enemies who were in pursuit of him on every side. In one of these pursuits, when his rear guard was suddenly attacked and driven forward, he ran to the rescue, and heard a Russian officer demand from the prisoners, 'Where is Pulaski?' Turning round, he cried out, 'Here I am,' and, rushing upon the officer, laid him dead at his feet.

"By an evil inseparable from a state of anarchy, many of the confederations had been poisoned by suspicions, spread abroad by design, against the elder Pulaski, and they regarded the son with the same suspicions. Some of them, indeed, were for attacking him and taking away his troops; but the soldiers were devoted to him. His vigilance never left an opportunity for surprise; and this man, so intrepid and terrible in combat, against whom there was no reproach but that of being too fond of danger, was at all other times amiable, gentle, conciliating, and always above personal resentment. After holding interviews with those, by whose designs he might have been justly incensed, he would lead them to engage in mutual operations, and afterwards seize every occasion to afford them his assistance."

His name was a terror to the Russians. They

seldom ventured to attack him with equal numbers. Informed of their caution, he sometimes took the name of another chief. On one occasion, he appeared before the little town of Sambor, under an assumed name, and drew out his troops to take it by storm. Sambor had been known to be devoted to the interests of the King. Skirmishes had scarcely begun, when the two parties discovered that they were friends. The town was in the possession of Francis Pulaski. We left him a fugitive under the walls of Choczim. He had recrossed the Niester, and collected a band of confederates, to whom were joined four hundred Turks. The joy of the two brothers at this unexpected meeting may well be imagined. A rumor had gone abroad, that they had both been killed in the defence of Zwaniek and Okopé, and each had wept for the other's death. The banners that floated on the walls of Sambor were clad in the symbols of mourning.

But their joy was clouded by the sad intelligence of their father's death in the prison, to which he had been consigned by the treachery and insatiate ambition of his pretended associates. In what manner he had perished was unknown. His friends proclaimed loudly their suspicions of Potocki. But the brothers were silent, and endeavored to smother the flame. "They said the noblest manner of honoring

their father's memory was to achieve his enterprise; that the sublime virtue, which they had learned from him, the virtue of sacrificing personal resentments to the public cause, required them to suspend all retaliation for his death; that the time might come when they could render justice to their father, but now they had one duty to perform, a single object to attain, the deliverance of their country."

In this resolution, so magnanimous and patriotic, they were perfectly united. They were agreed, likewise, in regard to the course which they should next pursue, and the general plan of operations for the Poles. The frightful cruelties practised by their enemies, rivalling the horrors of the most barbarous ages, convinced them that the hour of reconciliation was past, and that the expiring freedom of Poland could be resuscitated only by a union in arms of all her true and resolute sons. The Russian general had commanded his troops not to give quarter, and solemnly announced to them, that, if officers or soldiers should spare a captive confederate, they should be severely punished. Nine Polish gentlemen were mutilated by cutting off their hands, and this shocking spectacle was seen in the capital of their native country. The monster, by whose order was perpetrated this deed of more than savage cruelty, was a Russian offi-

cer named Drevitch. What Pole could witness scenes like this without sickness of heart, and a silent prayer to Heaven, that the sword of the avenger might vindicate the rights of humanity, and fall quickly and heavily on the heads of his tormentors?

It was now the plan of the two brothers to use all their efforts to form new confederations. They prepared for a long, difficult, and perilous march; and they prevailed on their officers to disencumber themselves of their superfluous baggage, and be ready for rapid movements. They selected the less hardy men, and those of imperfect health, formed them into a detachment, and placed them under a competent commander, whom they ordered to march with the detachment and baggage by a circuitous route into Hungary. With the remainder of their little army, amounting to six hundred men, they commenced their route through a country covered with dense forests, and contrived to evade the Russian spies and scouts till they found themselves within the borders of Lithuania.

Here they were well received by many nobles and gentlemen of the first rank, by whose means three hundred soldiers were immediately added to their numbers. New confederations were formed. Francis employed himself, as formerly, in visiting the principal inhabitants, and rousing



them to action. Casimir commanded the troops, to whose orders, as an officer, his brother always yielded implicit obedience. By his address, persuasion, and firmness, Francis brought over many, who had before been timid, indifferent, or even opposed to the scheme of confederations. The young Prince, Sapiéha embarked in the cause, and joined the army with an additional force.

These operations could not be long concealed. The Russians were on the alert, and they marched upon the confederates with one thousand men. An engagement ensued, but the Russians were routed, leaving two hundred dead on the field of battle. Casimir pursued them in their retreat, and, by a stratagem of war, showing the heads of columns at different places in the edge of a wood, thus making his numbers appear greater than they were, he succeeded in causing many of them to lay down their arms, on condition that they should return to Russia, and serve no more against the confederates.

The news of this victory spread rapidly, and raised the spirits of the Lithuanians. The army was soon increased to four thousand men; but they were generally undisciplined, and without experience or skill in arms. Pulaski was too wise to bring them to action with equal num-



bers of the veteran and regular troops of the enemy. He sought attacks only where he could see advantages that would balance this defect. He marched towards the north, and again encountered a large body of Russian cavalry. He stationed his troops behind a marsh, and then sent out a party to engage the enemy on their approach. This party was soon put to a voluntary flight, which was so conducted, by a knowledge of the ground, that the Russians were entangled in the marsh, where they were assailed by the main body, and defeated with a heavy loss. Other battles followed in different places; but the address and courage of Casimir Pulaski prevented the enemy from gaining, at any time, an advantage over him.

The two brothers proposed to march to the capital of Lithuania, form a confederation there, and carry the war from that point into every part of the Grand Duchy where a Russian soldier could be found. This scheme was not relished by some of the principal nobles, who would defer active military operations till the Turks, now at war with the Russians, should cross the frontiers to their assistance. They had not yet heard, perhaps, of the counsel which had been given by the sagacious Bishop of Kaminiek. "To call in the Turks," said he, "is like setting a house on fire to destroy

the insects it contains." The brothers believed Poland was to be saved, if saved at all, by the swords of her own sons. They had in part effected their object in coming to Lithuania, having inspired the confederates, encouraged them to form associations, and assembled them in arms. Their next resolution was to seek their companions in Hungary, at a distance of three hundred leagues. They began their march with six hundred men, leaving the Lithuanian army under the command of Prince Sapiéha.

Their departure was soon known to the Russians, and several detachments were sent out to watch and intercept their march. For some political purpose, Casimir directed his march through the open country, which he afterwards acknowledged to be an error, as his better judgment would have led him through a less accessible route, among rivers, morasses, and forests. While on their way, Francis being at the head of the troop, and Casimir with the rear guard, they were suddenly assailed by an overwhelming force of Russians. In the midst of the combat, it was told to Francis that his brother was a prisoner. Not aware that the report was erroneous, he turned back immediately, and rushed upon the enemy. He was never heard of afterwards. It is known only that his clothes, torn and bloody, were offered

for sale by Russian soldiers in a neighboring village. The little band of confederates was dispersed. Casimir himself, with ten men, escaped to the frontiers of Hungary, and joined the detachment which he had sent from Sambor.

Here he had a moment's respite to reflect on the singular fortunes that had awaited him during the last twelve months. He alone remained of the family, who had been the first to take up arms against the enemies of their country. His father had died in a dungeon, his youngest brother was a prisoner in Russia, his cousin had fallen in battle, and the life of Francis had been sacrificed to save his own. In Lithuania he had fought five severe battles, and, within six weeks, had traversed with his cavalry a distance of nearly five hundred leagues.

But inactivity was no part of his nature. He was soon in command of such an army as could be assembled, in conjunction with Zarem-ba, another confederate chief, with whom he acted in the same spirit of conciliation and harmony that always distinguished him. At the approach of winter, he took his station among the mountains, surrounded by high rocks, and sometimes fortified by intrenchments of ice and snow. He practised an ingenious device to protect himself from the enemy's cavalry. Having collected, from the neighboring villages, all

the iron rakes, he laid them, with the teeth upward, in the paths which led to his camp. The snow fell, and concealed them from view. When the Russians approached, they soon found their horses disabled, and themselves exposed to the assaults of their wily foe. Sometimes he came down like an eagle from his eyry, and pounced upon his prey below, carrying off provisions for his troops and prisoners. He boldly sent his prisoners to the Russian generals for exchange, and, by the terror of his name, compelled them to observe in their intercourse the laws of war.

“Never was there a warrior,” says Ruhlière, “who possessed greater dexterity in every kind of service. Endowed by a peculiar gift of nature, strengthened by exercise, he was always the first to charge in person, with an intrepidity which inspired his followers to imitate his example. Young men were drawn to him, and he, perceiving the inactivity into which the Poles of more advanced age had fallen by long habit, yielded his confidence to the young, who were formed by his lessons, and became emulous of his address and courage. There was no one among them who had not signalized himself by some remarkable exploit. Their extreme quickness and accuracy of observation, guiding them to judge of distances, and, by crossing



plains and entering woods, to cut off small Russian detachments, enabled them constantly to take many prisoners.

“Pulaski, by a natural ascendancy, was the chief among equals. All were ardent and bold, all sought danger, all strove to render mutual support. In this last particular, Pulaski had the advantage. He had scarcely an officer whom he had not rescued from the hands of the enemy, or from some danger, and who might not say that he owed his life and liberty to his commander. The other marshals, when they were uncertain what to do, consulted their subordinate officers, and thus were frequently exposed to address themselves to traitors. But, in the army of Pulaski, the chief alone took his resolutions; no one knew his secret; the confidence which all reposed in him inclined them to entire obedience, and checked an indiscreet curiosity. This troop, the most valorous, the most determined of those which served the confederation, was likewise the most poor. Casimir Pulaski was reluctant to raise contributions. The generosity of his nature rendered this necessity odious to him. The little money, which he could sometimes procure, he expended in paying his spies. Intrepid in combat, he was gentle, obliging, and sociable, never distrustful where he had once placed his confidence.



and never meddling in the intrigues which embroiled the confederations."

In the month of August, 1770, he descended from the mountains, and gave out that he intended to march directly upon Warsaw, and ordered forage to be prepared on the way. This rumor drew the Russians in that direction, while Pulaski pushed forward, by a forced march, to Cracow, the other capital of Poland, then in possession of the Russians and the King's guards. He appeared before the city at the dawn of day, took an advanced party, and penetrated through the suburbs to the walls of the town. There he captured a regiment of royal guards, who, in fact, joined his ranks, rejoiced at the opportunity of serving their country under so renowned a chief. The Russians made a sortie, but without effect.

As soon as this manœuvre was known, the Russian troops, who had expected to meet him on the road to Warsaw, turned towards Cracow. Meantime Pulaski marched suddenly away, and next appeared on that same road, collected the forage that had been prepared by his order, and, before the enemy could overtake him, encamped under the fortress of Czenstokow. This fortress was a monastery, standing in a gorge of lofty mountains, whose craggy summits were crowned with ancient forests. In addition to its natural

strength, the place was rendered formidable by high walls flanked with bastions and surrounded by a moat, deep and broad. Many were the wonders believed to have been wrought in this monastery, and its treasures had grown large by the pious offerings of devotees. The Russians were already besieging it, but they retired at the approach of Pulaski's cavalry.

The monks had a little garrison within their walls, and were disposed to maintain their independence both against the Russians and the confederates. By an innocent artifice, however, Pulaski contrived to introduce himself and his troops among them; and when they found that he neither touched their treasure, nor meddled in their internal affairs, they received him as a friend and protector. It happened that at this moment the Pope's nuncio was in the monastery, and Pulaski called the troops together, and asked his benediction. This ceremony made a lively impression on the minds of the soldiers, and won the hearts of the monks.

It was not doubted, that the Russians would return to lay siege again to this important post. Pulaski was determined to defend it, and, that he might gain time to strengthen the works, he planned an excursion, in which he and Zarembo took part, and menaced the city of Posen. The enemy was thus drawn after him, and when

he had kept them for some time at bay, and gained occasional advantages, he returned by a rapid march to Czenstokow, where he found his orders had been executed. There were other causes of delay, which enabled Pulaski to enlarge his fortifications, and procure a supply of powder and lead even from Warsaw. Confident in his resources, he retained but eight hundred men, and sent off a strong detachment of cavalry, under a brave young officer, to assist the confederates in another part of the country.

At length, four thousand Russians advanced to the fortress, with heavy cannon and mortars, which had been secretly sent to them by the King of Prussia, who was at the same time openly acting in the character of a pacificator. The bombardment began on the 3d of January, 1771. The eyes of the whole nation were turned upon this siege. The monastery of Czenstokow, renowned for its sanctity, had long been regarded by the people as under the immediate protection of Heaven. The Russian general had orders to level it to the ground if any resistance should be made. No motives were wanting to stimulate the resolution and courage of the besieged. The weather was extremely cold, and their garments were scanty. The sentinels would divest themselves of a part of their clothes for the benefit of others, who

came to supply their places ; and when Russian prisoners were taken, their uniform was made to adorn and shelter the persons of their captors.

The bombardment was kept up with spirit, but the assailants were never able to make a breach in the wall. Fire was sometimes communicated to the buildings within the fortress, which was promptly extinguished. Pulaski made several sorties, and destroyed the enemy's batteries. The Russians attempted three escalades, but they were repulsed each time with a heavy loss. Thus the siege continued for many days without any apparent progress, and it was finally abandoned by the Russians, who retired, leaving two hundred men dead in the snow. The deliverance of the monastery was looked upon as a miracle by the multitude ; the sleet, rain, and snow, which had fallen continually during the siege, were deemed to be prodigies ; and pilgrims flocked more eagerly than ever to the sanctuary, which was thus proved to be under the protecting care of a more than human power.

From this time Pulaski established his headquarters at Czenstokow, marching out and striking the enemy even at distant points, whenever an opportunity presented itself. On one occasion he was attacked by the Russian General Suwarof, with three thousand men, who seized his artillery. He soon recovered it, and then



advanced to a river, which he swam over with his cavalry, and cut off a party of four hundred Russians. Misled by false intelligence, he began another engagement, in which he was repulsed, and was then driven back to his strong post, effecting a hazardous retreat with so much skill as to elicit the praise of the Russian general.

It was during these manœuvres, that a misunderstanding occurred between Pulaski and Dumouriez. This French officer had been sent as a secret agent, the year before, to the confederates, with aids of money, and promises of larger supplies from the French court. It was a scheme of Choiseul; and, when he was dismissed from the ministry, it was laid aside by his successor, and Dumouriez was left without even the power to make promises. In short, the Poles were abandoned to their fate. But Dumouriez could not persuade himself that his vocation was at an end. He formed vast military projects, endeavored to organize the confederates, and seemed to place himself at their head, and expect they would obey his orders. Pulaski, and many other chiefs, were not willing to submit thus to the dictation of a foreigner, who knew nothing of their mode of warfare, and whose authority was assumed. The boldness and independence of Pulaski were offensive to Dumouriez, but they were not less honorable to him-



self as a native Pole, and a brave defender of his country.

At this time the Grand Council of the confederates had, by a solemn instrument, unanimously proclaimed the throne to be vacant, and declared Poniatowsky an enemy to the country. He was regarded as the great obstacle to their success, virtually the author of all their calamities, and an instrument in the hands of a tyrannical foreign power, to overthrow their constitution and annihilate their freedom. That this passive tool of despotism might be removed by proper means, was undoubtedly the wish of every patriot in Poland. It is not surprising, that, in the state of public feeling which then prevailed, ardent minds should form hazardous schemes, and dare to execute them. An incident of this sort occurred. The facts are these.

Two of the confederates, by the name of Strawinski and Kosinski, came to Pulaski, and asked him for an order to conduct Poniatowsky to Czenstokow. To this request Pulaski replied, that he doubted the expediency of such an enterprise; that he would give no order, and could approve the project only on condition that the life of the prisoner should be safe. Strawinski declared that he had no design upon his life; that the interest of the confederation, which he had entirely at heart, forbade such a design;

and that he intended to bring him alive. Upon this declaration, and with this express understanding, Pulaski agreed to second his views. He ordered Lukaski, one of his officers, to put himself under the direction of Strawinski, with a small party of men. To facilitate their enterprise, Pulaski led an expedition into the country, for the purpose of engaging the attention of the Russian troops, and drawing them away from Warsaw.

Between nine and ten o'clock, in the night of the 3d of November, Strawinski and ten or twelve of his accomplices found means to enter the gates of the capital unsuspected, and to seize the King while he was riding home in his carriage, having wounded him slightly in the head and killed one of his guards in the fray. They placed him on a horse, and made all speed out of the city, where they were joined by others, who were in readiness. The King's horse broke his leg in leaping a ditch. During the delay caused by this accident, the party was divided, those in advance moving too far forward, not knowing what had happened. Confusion followed; and, although the King was hurried along by the few that remained near him, yet the plan of concert was broken in the darkness of the night, and they became alarmed by the troops in pursuit of them from the city. Finally, they

dispersed, one after another, till the King was left with a single individual, Kosinski, who, one of the boldest in conducting the enterprise thus far, now fell at the King's feet, and declared himself his prisoner. Taking refuge in a mill near at hand, the King there wrote a note to a general officer in the city, who came with a guard of forty men, and escorted him back to his palace, where he arrived at the dawn of day.

Wraxall's account of this affair is exaggerated in the extreme, evidently drawn from the reports of the Russian faction, and from the rumors that floated in the mouths of the populace; and, in what relates to Pulaski, it is essentially false, if we may give credit to Ruhlière, who spared no pains to ascertain all the facts. Pulaski's object could have been effected only by obtaining Poniatowsky alive, for he hoped that he might be made a centre around which the nobles would rally, increase their strength by union, and ultimately expel their oppressors. Poniatowsky was at heart a friend to his country, and desired the independence of the Poles; but, by the feebleness of his character, his passion for the title of a king, and the caprice of circumstances, he was, in fact, employed to rivet their chains.

It suited the purpose of certain potentates to call this a conspiracy to assassinate the King.

Frederick of Prussia wrote a letter to Poniatowsky, congratulating him on his wonderful escape from the assassin's dagger. "A plot," says he, "so horrible in atrocity, will forever cover with shame and infamy its author and his accomplices. It is an affair which interests all sovereigns; and this abominable act, on the part of the confederates, should unite all the powers of Europe to take signal vengeance for so enormous a crime." The Empress of Austria wrote in a similar strain. And these were the persons, who had already, in secret, formed the most infamous plot that has ever been heard of since the world began, a conspiracy to dismember Poland by violence, to ruin the nation and divide the spoils.

One circumstance alone is enough to prove, that assassination was neither designed nor meditated. Poniatowsky was several hours in the hands of his captors, during which they might have killed him at any moment, and made their escape. It does not appear even that he received any harsh treatment, except what was necessary to hurry him away. In short, he owed his safety to their determination not to harm his person. Judicial proceedings were instituted, but Kosinski, the only witness, always affirmed that it was no part of their intention to assassinate the King. Lukaski and another of the accom-

plices were taken. At their trial, some months afterwards, so much had the popular mind been excited by the letters of the sovereigns, which had been published, that the prisoners could find no counsel to defend their cause, or to adduce proof that there had not been a conspiracy against the life of the King. They were condemned and executed. The same sentence was passed upon all the others known to have been concerned in the plot, including Pulaski.

He published a manifest, in which he protested his innocence of the charge laid against him, so far as it implicated him in any scheme to take the life of the King. The following is an extract.

“I am not astonished that the enemies of my country, resolved on her ruin, should direct their shafts against those, who resist the most firmly their impetuosity, and that they should regard as such the brave Poles, whom they have sacrificed, and who are still repelling their most cruel attacks. Nor ought I to complain, that, having the honor to command a party of my illustrious compatriots, these enemies have chosen me for the first object of their assaults. This I might naturally expect, considering the melancholy situation of my country, and my devotion to her defence. My destiny was clear, when, at the age of twenty-one, far from yielding



to the amusements common to youth, -I regarded every moment as lost, which was not employed in repelling the enemies of my country. My best witness was my late father, marshal of the confederate army, who has finished his career in the public service. He would have testified to the manner in which I dared to emulate his zeal.

“I have endeavored to mark my course by an invincible fortitude. Neither the blood of one of my brothers, which was shed by the enemy before my eyes, nor the cruel servitude of another, nor the sad fate of so many of my relations and compatriots, has shaken my patriotism. Always faithful to my country, I flatter myself that even my enemies will regard this strong bent of my nature as a patriotic impulse. I believe I have proved, by four years' service, that I have not been influenced by interest or a false point of honor. The first calumny against me has been published in the gazettes of the enemy, in which I am named as the author of a conspiracy executed at Warsaw. To this reproach I have hitherto submitted in silence, convinced that our enemies are eager to blacken with the pen those against whom they contend with arms. But I now follow the example of the published declaration of the confederate states; and, although I have determined to defend my country only

with the sword, I am induced, on this occasion, to use the pen. I declare before God, before the republic of Poland, and before all the powers of Europe, that my heart is an utter stranger to crime. My thoughts and actions have had no other end than the good of my country. It has never entered my imagination to attempt the life of any person to whom has been assigned, in any manner whatsoever, the government of the nation, or to avenge the wrongs of my country in any other way than that of open war."

This manifest was published in January, 1772. The star of freedom in Poland had already set. Prussian and Austrian troops were beginning to cross the frontiers, under pretence of protecting the government of the King, as the serpent protects the victim it is about to devour, by the previous ceremony of crushing its bones in the gradual pressure of its folds. The last hope of the confederates was vanishing before their eyes. The conspiracy of the three sovereigns, which had been seething in the caldron of secret treachery, was now ready to show itself openly to an astonished world, and to stamp on its authors the seal of eternal shame and infamy. The other powers of Europe, cajoled, deceived, irresolute, till it was too late to act, folded their hands, and sat down silent and passive witnesses of so great a crime.

Neither the counsels of wisdom, nor the sword of the warrior, could longer avail the unfortunate Poles ; and, in any event, Pulaski must soon have retired from a country, the land of his birth and his affections, whose sinking cause he had made so many noble sacrifices to sustain. But now, an outlaw by a judicial decision, without trial and without evidence, yet enforced by the dominant authority, he was not safe even in his stronghold at Czenstokow, the proud theatre of his heroic intrepidity, his military skill, and patriotic devotion. Turning his back upon the scenes of his early years, endeared by the recollection of those most near to him, who had died in their country's defence ; upon the mountains and plains which he loved, because he associated them with the freedom of his native land ; upon the friends and companions in arms, who had fought and bled by his side to maintain that freedom for themselves and their posterity ; he sought an asylum among strangers.

The events of the next five years of Count Pulaski's life have not been related. It is known only, that, amidst numerous adventures and perils, he found his way into Turkey. His hopes were frustrated, however, in that quarter, where the war against Russia was languidly conducted, and was soon closed by a treaty of peace.

At what time he went to France is uncertain ;

but he was there not long after the declaration of independence by the American Congress. He saw a new field opened for vindicating with his sword the same principles, the same rights of mankind, the same unchangeable laws of justice, as those for which he had wielded it with so much courage and singleness of purpose in his own country. He resolved to fight the battles of freedom on a distant shore. Dr. Franklin, then in Paris, wrote to General Washington as follows. "Count Pulaski, of Poland, an officer famous throughout Europe for his bravery and conduct in defence of the liberties of his country against the three great invading powers of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, will have the honor of delivering this into your hands. The court here have encouraged and promoted his voyage, from an opinion that he may be highly useful in our service." Again, in another letter, he says, "Count Pulaski is esteemed one of the greatest officers in Europe." With such a recommendation he could not fail to meet a welcome reception from the Commander-in-chief and Congress. He arrived at Philadelphia during the summer of 1777, and joined the army at first as a volunteer, in this respect imitating the example of La Fayette.

His experience and successes had been mainly with cavalry, and in this line of service he de-

sired to be employed. It may be remarked, that, during the first eighteen months of the war, there was no regular cavalry. An opinion was indeed entertained, that this description of force was not suited to the country ; and it is true, that in former wars it had been very little used, owing probably to the illimitable forests on the frontiers, in which the most active operations had usually been conducted. General Charles Lee had early urged upon Congress the importance of a well organized body of dragoons. The want of them was severely felt in the campaign of 1776, especially at the battle of Long Island, in which there were not horsemen enough to perform the necessary service of vedettes. Four or five hundred of the Connecticut light-horse offered their services to the army at New York ; but no provision had been made by Congress for paying the charge of horses. Their patriotism prompted them to remain for a time at their own expense.

General Howe had brought with him horses from England, sufficient to equip a respectable body of cavalry. Wholly inexperienced in their mode of tactics, the American officers and soldiers seem not to have faced them with that degree of resolution, which they had shown when they met the infantry. While the army was encamped at White Plains, an order was issued by General Washington, explaining the nature of



cavalry movements, and showing that little danger was to be apprehended from them where the roads were lined and the fields divided by stone walls; and to encourage enterprises against them, a reward of one hundred dollars was offered for every trooper that should be taken with his horse and accoutrements.

Upon the organization of a new army, however, at the end of the campaign, care was taken to include in the plan four regiments of cavalry. Officers being appointed, and enlisting orders sent out, the regiments were filled up without difficulty. They were commanded by Colonels Bland, Baylor, Sheldon, and Moylan. The command of the whole was offered to General Joseph Reed, but he declined the offer; so that, till the arrival of Count Pulaski, the cavalry was under no higher officer than colonel. This was the less important, as the regiments never acted together, but were generally employed in detached parties, or on service at points remote from each other. To supply the deficiency, however, Washington recommended Count Pulaski for this post, saying, in his letter to Congress, "This gentleman has been, like us, engaged in defending the liberty and independence of his country, and has sacrificed his fortune to his zeal for those objects. He derives from hence a title to our respect that ought to operate

in his favor, as far as the good of the service will permit." He also adds, "Though the horse will suffer less from the want of a general officer than the foot, a man of real capacity, experience, and knowledge in that service, might be extremely useful."

This was written a few days before the battle of the Brandywine, and on that occasion Count Pulaski, as well as Lafayette, was destined to strike his first blow in defence of American liberty. Being a volunteer, and without command, he was stationed near General Washington till towards the close of the action, when he asked the command of the general's body-guard, about thirty horse, and advanced rapidly within pistol-shot of the enemy, and, after reconnoitring their movements, returned and reported that they were endeavoring to cut off the line of retreat, and particularly the train of baggage. He was then authorized to collect as many of the scattered troops as came in his way, and employ them according to his discretion, which he did in a manner so prompt and bold, as to effect an important service in the retreat of the army, fully sustaining, by his conduct and courage, the reputation for which the world had given him credit. Four days after this event, he was appointed by Congress to the command of the cavalry, with the rank of brigadier-general.

The enemy was met next on the Lancaster road, about twenty-three miles from Philadelphia, it being the intention of General Washington, in marching thither, to give battle to the British general wherever he should be found. Count Pulaski was now at the head of the cavalry; but the number with the army was small, and was necessarily employed in reconnoitring, watching the advanced parties of the enemy, and conveying intelligence. The army was ordered to halt for refreshment near the Warren tavern. The following particulars are related by Colonel Bentalou.

“It was then that Pulaski, intending to scour the country, and reconnoitre the enemy, fell, to his astonishment, on their whole army in full march. He charged the van, and of course caused a short halt, and, returning at full speed to head-quarters, which were in a farm-house, demanded to speak to the Commander-in-chief. He was told that he could not be seen, as he was then holding a council of war; but this redoubled his anxiety; and Washington, hearing the bustle from the next room, came out himself, accompanied by his aid, Colonel Hamilton, who, it may be remarked, spoke French very well. The unexpected intelligence communicated by Pulaski startled General Washington. Colonel Hamilton heedlessly observed to the

Count, that he had perhaps made a mistake, and had only seen some of our own people; an observation natural enough in Hamilton, as Pulaski was a foreigner. It however gave great offence to Pulaski, who indeed flew into a violent passion. When Washington learned the cause, he apologized for his aid, remarking that he was a young man, who had no intention to offend him; and then naturally said to Pulaski, 'Count, what would you advise?' or something to that effect. Pulaski replied, that he thought a detachment of about three hundred infantry, with the cavalry he had with him, could retard the enemy's approach sufficiently to give time to prepare for their reception. The detachment was instantly ordered out, under the command of Brigadier-General Scott, and, in great bustle and hurry, the whole army moved on to form the lines. The storm, which arose, separated the armies, when their advanced parties had hardly engaged. To all these circumstances I can testify, having been with Pulaski from the first discovery of the enemy, till the conclusion of the interview just described."

In the battle of Germantown, which happened a few days later, he took such part as his command would allow. He has been charged by one writer with a delinquency on this occasion, in being off his guard in the night, while

he was in advance of the army, marching towards the enemy's lines. As no other writer has mentioned this circumstance, and it was never made known to the public till more than forty years after it is said to have occurred, and as it is proved by the whole course of his life, that Pulaski's military fault, if he had one, was that of rushing with too much impetuosity upon the enemy, it seems both idle and unjust to entertain for a moment such a suspicion, especially when it is not pretended to rest on any better foundation than conjecture and hearsay. The cavalry was so much separated, by attending the different divisions of the army on their march, and other service, that, during the battle, the several detachments were not in a condition to be brought into action together under their commander, a necessity which he deeply deplored.

At length, when the army retired from the field to Valley Forge for the winter, the cavalry was stationed at Trenton for the convenience of procuring forage, and Pulaski established his head-quarters at that place. Before he left the camp, he presented a memorial to General Washington, explaining the condition of the cavalry, and using many arguments to enforce its being put on a better footing. "While we are superior in cavalry," he remarks, "the enemy will not



dare to extend their force, and although we act on the defensive, we shall have many opportunities of attacking and destroying them by degrees; whereas, if they have it in their power to augment their cavalry, and we suffer ours to diminish and dwindle away, it may happen that the loss of a battle may terminate in our total defeat. Our army, once dispersed and pursued by their horse, will not be able to rally; and thus our retreat may be easily cut off, our baggage lost, our principal officers taken, and many other events may occur not less fatal. Be assured that the good of the service is my constant study; but the weak state of the corps I command renders it impossible to perform every service required. Nay, my reputation is exposed, as, being an entire stranger in the country, the least accident would suffice to injure me; yet I cannot avoid hazarding everything that is valuable in life."

When he arrived in Trenton, the prospect before him was by no means encouraging. He writes, "There was not a load of hay in the town, and with the greatest difficulty we have been enabled to put our heads under cover. I have applied to the civil magistrates for directions relative to the forming of a magazine. In the mean time, the horses must subsist, and I have been obliged to divide them into small

parties, and send them out about two miles from the town, until the necessary provision both for forage and quarters can be made." Again he says, "I wish to discipline the cavalry, and I flatter myself by the next campaign to render it essentially serviceable. What has greatly contributed to its present weak state, has been the frequent detachments ordered to the suite of general and other officers, which were appropriated to every use, and the horses were driven at the discretion of the dragoons."

With his accustomed energy he applied himself to the task of reform, and began a regular process of exercise and discipline. Colonel Kowatch, who had been an officer in the Prussian service, and was skilled in training cavalry, took this business under his immediate charge.

But the ruling passion of the commander of the cavalry was soon gratified by an opportunity for action. The army at Valley Forge was on the point of starvation, while the country for several miles around Philadelphia was overrun by foraging parties of the enemy, and stripped of everything upon which they could lay their hands for their own use. General Washington determined to obstruct the depredations of these parties, and at the same time relieve, as far as possible, the distresses of his own troops. General Wayne was ordered out, with a proper detach-

ment, to scour the country for this purpose. He was instructed to seize cattle, horses, and provisions, such as were not wanted by the inhabitants, giving them certificates of the value, with the promise that these should be paid by the quarter-master in due time.

Pulaski was directed to join General Wayne with a party of dragoons. The two detachments came together in New Jersey, opposite to Philadelphia. Three thousand British troops were despatched across the Delaware River, who attempted to surround and surprise them in the night at Haddonfield; but this attempt was defeated by the vigilance of Wayne. In their retreat they were assailed and harassed by the Americans, who pressed closely upon their rear, skirmishing sharply with their exposed parties, especially while they were preparing to recross the river. Pulaski, at the head of his little troop of cavalry, was everywhere on the alert, seeking the assailable points of the enemy, and repeatedly charging them with spirit and effect. His horse was wounded, and his intrepidity and conduct throughout were such, as to elicit the warm praises of General Wayne in his report to the Commander-in-chief.

After five months' experience, however, at the head of the cavalry, he found it was not a post which answered his expectation, or in which he

could perform a part adequate to his hopes and his desires. The nature of the service was such, that these troops must be constantly separated into small parties, remote from each other, subject to the command of the general officers of the different divisions of the army, and of course not capable of acting upon any general system, or with important effect upon any one point. Moreover, the officers of the several regiments, who had heretofore been in a measure independent, were not easily reconciled to the orders of a superior, particularly of a foreigner, who did not understand their language, and whose ideas of discipline, arrangement, and manœuvres, were different from those to which they had been accustomed. These circumstances caused some uneasiness during the winter at Trenton, although no formal complaint was made against the commander.

Pulaski, perceiving the difficulties, unwilling to be the promoter of them, and fully convinced that a remedy could not be well applied, at length resigned the command, of his own accord, and returned to the main army at Valley Forge, about the middle of March, 1778. Still ardent in the cause, and anxious to be employed in a way in which his knowledge and experience might be turned to the best account, he proposed to General Washington the organization

of an independent corps, which should be placed under his immediate command. This corps was to consist of cavalry armed with lances, and of foot equipped as light-infantry. Washington approved the plan, and recommended it to Congress. In his letter, he said, "The Count's valor and active zeal on all occasions have done him great honor. It is to be understood that he expects to retain his rank as brigadier, and, I think, is entitled to it from his character and particular disinterestedness on the present occasion."

With this letter Count Pulaski went himself to Yorktown, where Congress was then sitting. His proposal was favorably received, and he was authorized to raise and equip a body of sixty-eight light-horse and two hundred foot, according to his own suggestion. It was called *Pulaski's Legion*. This was an experiment; and if it should prove successful, the number of men might afterwards be enlarged. The scheme of independent legions seems to have been first suggested by Pulaski; and it proved of the greatest importance in the subsequent operations of the war, and above all in the southern campaigns. Lee's and Armand's legions were formed upon a similar plan. Pulaski was allowed to enlist his recruits with the continental bounty, and to include prisoners and deserters. The policy of this latter measure was more than doubtful. General



Washington had resisted it strenuously at the beginning of the war, and prevailed on Congress to pass a resolve to that effect. Little confidence could be placed in a prisoner, whose attachments would naturally be with the enemy ; and less in a deserter, who might be as ready to leave one service as another, if he could gain an advantage by it. As there were many German prisoners and deserters in the country, however, who could not have much interest in fighting the battles of England, it was thought that they might be employed without hazard, and an exception to the general rule was made in the present instance.

The men were all to be recruited anew expressly for this legion, and Count Pulaski applied himself with great diligence and activity to the task. He was authorized to enlist men in any state ; but when enlisted, they were to be reckoned as a part of the quota, which the state to which they belonged was bound to furnish to the continental army. His success was more flattering than he had anticipated ; for no other encouragement was held out than what was common to other branches of the army, and in October, he reported his whole number to be three hundred and thirty, which was about sixty more than was at first proposed. They were organized into three companies of horse and three of infantry.

During the summer, while he was raising and equipping his legion, he had no opportunity for bringing them into action; but in the autumn, a part of the legion was engaged in a rencounter, which, without any apparent fault of the commander in the disposition of his troops, was nevertheless unfortunate. Little Egg Harbor, in New Jersey, was a rendezvous for American privateers, which frequently ran out and made prizes of British vessels as they were sailing along the coast to and from New York. An expedition of British troops had proceeded from New York by water, landed, destroyed the vessels, burnt many houses, and committed depredations on the inhabitants. Pulaski was ordered to march from Trenton with his legion, a company of artillery, and a party of militia, and protect the country in that quarter; but before his arrival, the British, having effected their object, had returned on board their vessels. He formed his camp by placing the infantry of his legion, under Lieutenant-Colonel De Bosen, on the left, and the light dragoons and militia on the right.

Among the officers in the legion was a deserter, by the name of Juliet, who had left the enemy not long before, and offered his services to the Board of War; and at their request he was admitted to hold a subordinate place in one of the companies of the legion. For some cause.

whether just or not, he had been harshly treated by De Bosen, and he determined to seek the first opportunity for revenge. While the detachment was lying in the position above described, a few miles from the sea-shore, this man left the camp, with two others, on the pretence of fishing; and, as they did not return, it was supposed they were drowned, as it could not be imagined that a deserter would go back so soon to the enemy. It turned out otherwise. He found means to board one of the enemy's vessels, and communicated exact intelligence of the position of the encampment, the force it contained, and of the best route to be pursued in approaching it. Under his guidance, a party of troops landed in the night, marched cautiously towards the station occupied by De Bosen, and, at three o'clock in the morning, made a furious attack upon his camp. The deserter was seen among the foremost, pointing towards the Lieutenant-Colonel, and calling out his name. De Bosen fell, pierced through and through with bayonet wounds. Others shared a similar fate before the infantry could rally for their defence, as no quarter was given.

On the first alarm, Count Pulaski hastened to the scene of action with his cavalry, and drove the enemy from the ground. They fled in great disorder, till they crossed a bridge, from which

they removed the planks, and prevented the further approach of the horse, though some of the infantry passed over, and kept up a fire upon their rear. Several prisoners were taken, and others would have been captured, if an intervening swamp had not embarrassed the movements of the horse. The loss of the legion, as reported by Count Pulaski, was about forty men, killed, wounded, and missing. The surprise was complete, and it would seem that De Bosen was not as vigilant as his exposed situation required. It was hardly possible, however, under any circumstances, to guard against such an act of treachery; and the catastrophe afforded a most convincing proof of the impolicy of enlisting or employing deserters.

The season was now drawing to a close; and Pulaski's legion, with other troops, was stationed for the winter at Minisink, on the Delaware River, in the north-west corner of New Jersey. The terrible massacre lately committed at Cherry Valley, and the hostile attitude of the Indians and Tories in the western parts of New York, were the occasion of placing troops at this remote point for the protection of the frontiers. Pulaski's quarters were first at Cole's Fort; but he removed them to another position in that neighborhood, where he could more easily procure forage and subsistence.

For some cause he seems not to have been well pleased with his situation at this time. Perhaps his command was not adequate to his expectation, or perhaps the weariness of inactivity affected his spirits, and threw a dark shade over the future. At any rate, he hinted his dissatisfaction to the Commander-in-chief, with an intimation that he might soon leave the service, urging some reasons of a private nature that required his return to Europe. Washington replied in a manner, which could hardly fail to soothe his discontent, and change his wavering resolutions. "I assure you," said he, "that I have a high sense of your merit and services, and the principles that influenced the part you have taken in the affairs of this country. The disinterested and unremitted zeal, which you have manifested in the service; gives you a title to the esteem of the citizens of America, and has assured you mine." His irresolute purpose was apparently settled by this letter, so flattering to his ambition, and so honorable to his principles and exertions. His legion remained at Minisink about three months.

The British had already taken possession of Savannah and the larger part of Georgia, and there was the greatest probability that the coming campaign would witness a vigorous prosecution of the war in the Southern States. As early as



September, in anticipation of this event, and at the special request of the delegates from South Carolina, Congress had appointed General Lincoln to the command of the southern department. It was, at the same time, proposed to send Pulaski's legion to the south ; but the measure was deferred till the beginning of February, 1779, when he was ordered to march to South Carolina, and put himself under the command of General Lincoln. This order was obeyed with as much expedition as possible.

That the long march might be prosecuted with the greater facility for securing provisions and other supplies, and also for recruiting men on the way, the legion was separated into two divisions. One of these, at the head of which was Count Pulaski in person, marched by the upper road through the interior of the country, whilst the other, consisting of infantry and a small troop of horse, took the lower route near the sea-shore. This division was detained for a short time at Williamsburg, having arrived there just at the moment when a detachment of the enemy landed in the Chesapeake.

When Pulaski was approaching Charleston with the other division, he learned that the British had made an incursion into South Carolina from Georgia, and were marching towards the city. Selecting his ablest men and horses, he

hastened forward with them by forced marches, and entered the town on the 8th of May. Three days afterwards, the remainder arrived; and on the same day, nine hundred British troops from the army under General Prevost crossed Ashley River, and invested Charleston, near the lines which had been thrown up between Ashley and Cooper Rivers.

Scarcely waiting till the enemy had crossed the ferry, Pulaski sallied out with his legion and a few mounted volunteers, and made an assault upon the advanced parties. With the design of drawing the British into an ambuscade, he stationed his infantry on low ground behind a breastwork, and then rode forward a mile, with his cavalry, in the face of a party of British light-horse, with whom he came to close quarters, and kept up a sharp skirmish till he was compelled to retreat by the increasing numbers of the enemy. (His coolness, courage, and disregard of personal danger, were conspicuous throughout the rencounter, and the example of this prompt and bold attack had great influence in raising the spirits of the people, and inspiring the confidence of the inexperienced troops then assembled in the city.) The infantry, impatient to take part in the conflict, advanced to higher ground in front of the breastwork, and thus the scheme of an ambuscade was defeated. Colonel Kowatch was

killed ; several of the infantry were likewise killed, and others were wounded and taken prisoners.

The British army now before Charleston amounted to three thousand six hundred men, and the American troops within the city, consisting of Carolina militia and two continental regiments, were about three thousand. The town was summoned to surrender. The subject was considered by the Governor and Council, who were at first inclined to give up the town by capitulation, upon the most favorable terms that could be obtained. General Lincoln was marching from the Savannah River, with about four thousand men ; but he could not be expected to arrive soon enough to afford any relief, and the calamities of a siege or a storm looked appalling to the inhabitants and the civil authorities. While the balance was in suspense, but strongly inclining to the side of capitulation, Pulaski went before the Council, and urged them not to adopt such timid measures, and expressed his firm conviction, that, with the troops in the city and the works already thrown up, it might be defended, and the enemy at least kept at bay, till the approach of General Lincoln should compel them to decamp.

This advice, earnestly proffered by an officer of so much experience and acknowledged military talents, revived the hopes of the Council. It was warmly seconded by General Moultrie ;

and also by Colonel John Laurens, a young man eminent for his abilities and conduct as a soldier, his patriotism, and his accomplishments of mind and character, who, before the end of the war, lost his life in battle. The united opinion and zealous efforts of these officers saved the town from the mortification of a surrender. The signal was given, that all negotiation was at an end. General Prevost retreated across the river in the night of the same day, apprehending, no doubt, that General Lincoln would be upon his rear before he could carry the town by force.

As it was uncertain what direction the enemy would take, Pulaski immediately went out with his cavalry, and a party of mounted volunteers, to reconnoitre. He passed up to the vicinity of Dorchester bridge, where he would be in a position to convey intelligence in the shortest time to General Moultrie in the city, and to Lincoln on his march from the interior. As it happened, General Prevost pursued his course among the islands near the sea. Easy access was thus secured to his boats and shipping, and he avoided the hazard of a combat with a superior force, when Lincoln and Moultrie should be united. Passing over to James's and John's Islands, he was secure from an attack, and he remained there three or four weeks. While he was effecting these movements, Pulaski's legion har-



assed his army at all assailable points, and on one occasion was engaged in a smart skirmish, in which two of his officers were killed. But he soon joined General Lincoln, and acted under his orders. He was incessantly employed in reconnoitring the enemy, although suffering under a severe attack of fever and ague ; and he was prepared to make a descent upon James's Island, under the command of General Moultrie, at the time of General Lincoln's action at Stono ; but this descent and coöperation were prevented by a want of boats.

At length, in the first part of July, General Prevost returned to Savannah with the main body of his army, leaving a detachment at Beaufort, under Colonel Maitland. Active operations now ceased, and General Lincoln took post at Sheldon, a healthy situation in the neighborhood of Beaufort. Count Pulaski returned to Charleston for the recovery of his health, which had become much impaired by constant exposure in a low, marshy country, during the hot season. Most of his men were in a similar condition.

On the 3d of September, intelligence came to General Lincoln, then at Charleston, that Count d'Estaing was off the coast with a large French fleet, and was prepared to coöperate with him in the reduction of Savannah. The next day, a French officer from the fleet landed in the



city, and the plan of operations was agreed upon. Colonel Laurens was sent with despatches to Count d'Estaing. Troops were to be marched, as soon as possible, into Georgia, the French were to land at Beuleau, near the mouth of the Savannah River, and a junction was then to be formed in the vicinity of Savannah.

In six days, General Lincoln arrived, with the army, at Zubly's Ferry, a few miles above Purysburg. A row-boat and a single canoe were all the water-craft that could be found for transporting the troops across the Savannah River. There had not yet been time for the boats, which had been ordered from Augusta, to come down the river, nor for the march of General McIntosh, who was to join the main army with his detachment at that place. It was known, however, that the enemy's outposts were at Ebenezer, on the opposite side, and it was extremely important to reconnoitre and ascertain their position and force. To effect this object, the canoe was put to a good service. It would hold three men. Count Pulaſki sent over one of his troopers with his accoutrements, who led his horse swimming by the side of the canoe. The experiment was successtul, and in this way between twenty and thirty men passed over with their horses. The command of the party was given to Captain Bentalou, who was ordered to move towards the enemy and send back intelligence

The road for three miles was a broken causeway, which was passed with difficulty, as several bridges were to be repaired. On emerging from this defile, they discovered two redoubts, which commanded its entrance, but which had been deserted a short time before. This was a fortunate circumstance to the adventurous troopers, for they must otherwise have been cut off, since they could have received no support. Captain Bentalou marched forward the next day without molestation; the outposts and redoubts had all been abandoned, and the enemy had retreated within the lines at Savannah. Late in the evening, he halted within sight of the town. About midnight, he was hailed by a voice, which proved to be that of Pulaski himself, who had pushed on with the remainder of the legion. The position was not suited for so large a number, and they turned into the first road at the right, which led through a wood, and encamped in an open plantation.

The next morning he received intelligence of the landing of Count d'Estaing, and a complimentary letter from him, in which he said, that "knowing Count Pulaski was there, he was sure he would be the first to join him." From this time till the meeting of the combined armies before Savannah, which was four days afterwards, the legion was employed without intermission.

It was necessary to exercise vigilance and caution, as both the armies were too far distant to afford any support. Pulaski changed his quarters every night, generally keeping six or seven miles from the town, and leading or sending detachments to attack the enemy's pickets. Some of these were cut off, and prisoners were taken. He met Count d'Estaing on his march from the place of landing, and was cordially received by that commander. Finally, the two armies came together, on the 16th of September, and invested the town, the French troops being stationed on the right, and the Americans on the left.

It is not consistent with the purpose of this narrative to give the details of the siege. Pulaski fully sustained, in his sphere of action, the exalted reputation, as a man of military resource and conduct, which his previous career had won. During the siege, General Lincoln gained information, that a party of the enemy had ascended Ogechee River, and landed a little below the ferry. Count Pulaski was despatched, with his dragoons, to attack them. He came upon their camp by surprise, took several prisoners, and dispersed the remainder, who sought refuge on board their vessels.

Weary of the siege, and concerned for the safety of his fleet as the season advanced, Count d'Estaing resolved to make an attempt on the

town by storm. General Lincoln reluctantly assented, because there was a fair prospect that the town would be carried in a few days by regular approaches; but Count d'Estaing could not resist the importunity of his naval officers. The plan of assault was accordingly arranged. It was to be made on the redoubts at the north part of the enemy's lines. In the order for the assault, it is said, "The cavalry under the command of Count Pulaski will parade at the same time with the infantry, and follow the left column of the French troops, and precede the column of the American light troops; they will endeavor to penetrate the enemy's lines between the battery on the left of the Spring Hill redoubt and the next towards the river." They were then to pass to the left, and secure such parties of the enemy as might be lodged in that quarter. Both the French and American cavalry were to be under the command of Pulaski.

The assault was made, and the assailants were repulsed. A sergeant deserted from the American army on the evening after the order for the attack was given out, and carried it to the British general within the lines, so that he knew the plan of assault, and had time to make the best disposition of his forces. As the columns approached the redoubts, they were met by a tremendous fire from the enemy's batteries. The



French and American columns were each to attack a particular redoubt. Lieutenant-Colonel Laurens gained the parapet of one redoubt under a galling fire. General McIntosh pressed forward to another. The French column was led by Count d'Estaing in person. To avoid a circuitous route he crossed a swamp, and while performing this march he received two wounds, and was borne from the field. His troops passed the abatis, but the carnage was so great from the fire of the batteries, that they were able to make little impression.

The cavalry were stationed in the rear of the advanced columns, and in the confusion which appeared in front, and in the obscurity caused by the smoke, Pulaski was uncertain where he ought to act. To gain information on this point, he determined to ride forward in the heat of the conflict, and called to Captain Bentalou to accompany him. They had proceeded but a short distance, when they heard of the havoc that had been produced in the swamp among the French troops. Hoping to animate these troops by his presence, he rushed onward, and, while riding swiftly to the place where they were stationed, he received a wound in the groin from a swivel-shot, and fell from his horse near the abatis. Captain Bentalou was likewise wounded by a



musket-ball. Count Pulaski was left on the field till nearly all the troops had retreated, when some of his men returned, in the face of the enemy's guns, and took him to the camp.

After this unfortunate attempt, the enterprise against Savannah was abandoned. The French troops embarked on board their fleet, and General Lincoln marched to South Carolina, the two commanders and armies separating in perfect harmony, and without any reproaches upon each other on account of their ill success. The firing continued fifty-five minutes, during which time the loss of the French, according to Dr. Ramsay, was six hundred and thirty-seven killed and wounded, and that of the Americans two hundred and sixty-four; a convincing proof of the determined spirit with which the assault was made, and of the overwhelming force which the British general had brought to the point of attack.

Count Pulaski and Captain Bentalou were conveyed on board the United States brig *Wasp*, which was then with the French fleet. The brig remained several days in the Savannah River. The captain's wound was not dangerous; and the most skilful French surgeons bestowed every possible attention upon Pulaski. Their skill was unavailing; the wound was mortal. He expired just as the brig was leaving the mouth of the

river, and his body was committed to a watery grave. Thus was closed the life of this extraordinary warrior, at the early age of thirty-two.

The *Wasp* entered the harbor of Charleston with the flag at half mast. The same signal was repeated by all the shipping in the port, and by the fortifications and batteries around the town. The mournful intelligence of his death produced a deep impression on the inhabitants, and all classes joined in testifying their sorrow, and in honoring the memory of a man, who had sacrificed his life in a brave defence of their cause. The Governor and Council of the state, and the municipal authorities of Charleston, united in rendering a public testimony of honor and respect. A day was set apart for the funeral solemnities. The procession was long and imposing. The pall was borne by three French and three American officers, followed by the horse upon which Pulaski had received his mortal wound, with his armor, accoutrements, and uniform. An impressive discourse was pronounced by a chaplain of the army.

Congress voted that a monument should be erected to the memory of Count Pulaski, thus pledging the nation to perform a pious duty of gratitude. The pledge has never been redeemed. The vote stands on the journals, where it was entered sixty-five years ago, a memorial at once of

the services and merits of a brave man, and of a nation's forgetfulness and ingratitude. Nor does it stand solitary there. To the memory of many other officers, who lost their lives fighting the battles of their country, Congress decreed the same tribute; and in every instance, except in that of the chivalrous Montgomery, the decree remains to this day an empty record, neglected, forgotten, a reproach to a nation's generous sympathies and sense of justice. Private individuals have acted a nobler part, and contributed to lessen, in some degree, the reproach that rests on their country. When Lafayette was on a visit at Savannah, during his triumphal progress through the United States, he laid, with appropriate ceremonies, the corner-stones of two monuments in that city, one to the memory of General Greene, the other to that of Count Pulaski, both erected by the munificence of the citizens of Georgia.

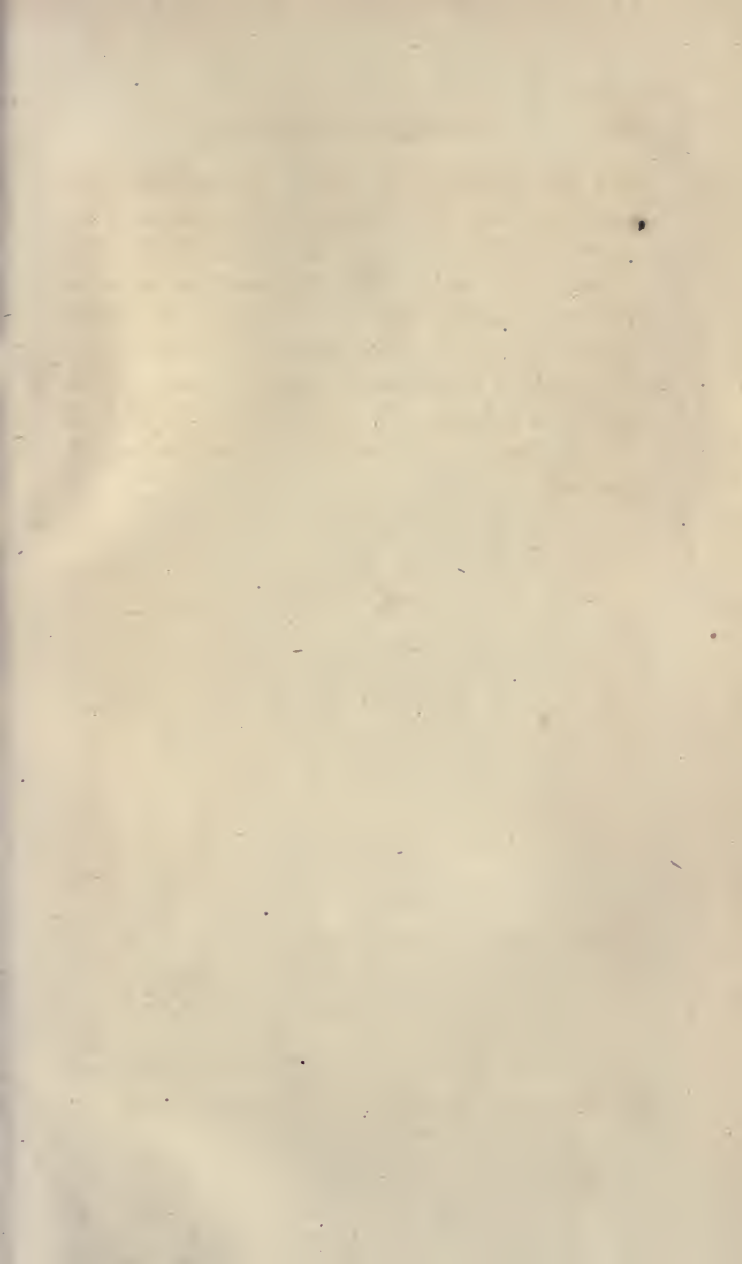
The incidents in the life of Pulaski, which have been thus briefly sketched, will enable the reader to form a fair estimate of his character. In his private qualities he seems to have been amiable, gentle, conciliating, candid, sincere, generous to his enemies and devoted to his friends. Amidst extreme party excitements, and the feuds of a civil war, he was never known to embroil himself with the factions that distracted his country, nor to fall into dissensions with his military

compatriots. His soldiers adhered to him as to a brother, and willingly endured fatigues and encountered perils the most appalling, when encouraged by his approbation or led on by his example. He possessed, in a remarkable degree, the power of winning and controlling men, a power so rare, that it may be considered not less the fruit of consummate art than a gift of nature. Energetic, vigilant, untiring in the pursuit of an object, fearless, fertile in resources, calm in danger, resolute and persevering under discouragements, he was always prepared for events, and capable of effecting his purposes with the best chance of success. He was true to his principles and firm in maintaining them. An ardent attachment to his country and to her liberties, and the hope of rescuing her from the thralldom of despotic rule, were the motives which roused his indignant spirit, animated his zeal, and nerved his arm in battle, till the freedom of Poland had expired in the grasp of her powerful and perfidious oppressors.

During his short career in America, we perceive the same traits of character, and the same steady principles of action. That he gained and preserved the friendship of Washington, who more than once in a public manner commended his military talents, his disinterestedness and zeal, is a sufficient proof of his merits as an officer,

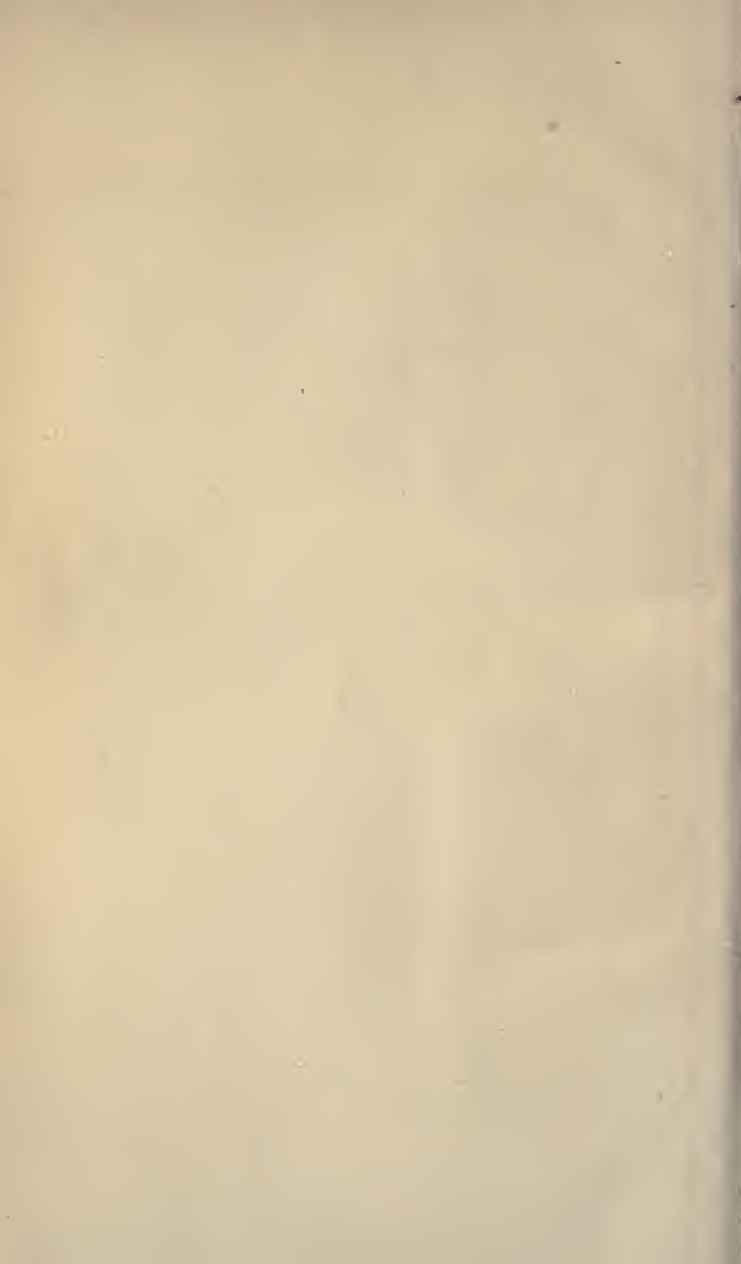
and his conduct as a man. His activity was unceasing, and his courage was conspicuous on every occasion in which he had an opportunity to meet the enemy. He embraced our cause as his own, harmonizing as it did with his principles and all the noble impulses of his nature, the cause of liberty and of human rights; he lost his life in defending it; thus acquiring the highest of all claims to a nation's remembrance and gratitude.

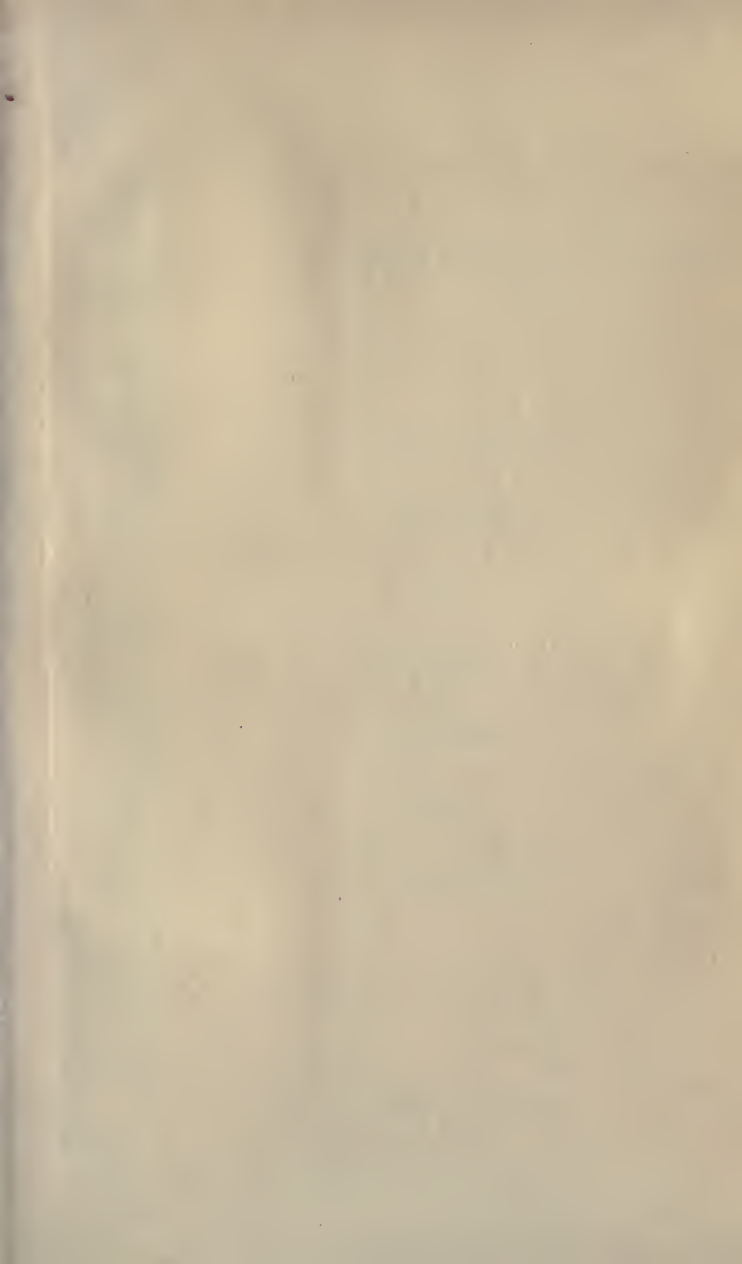




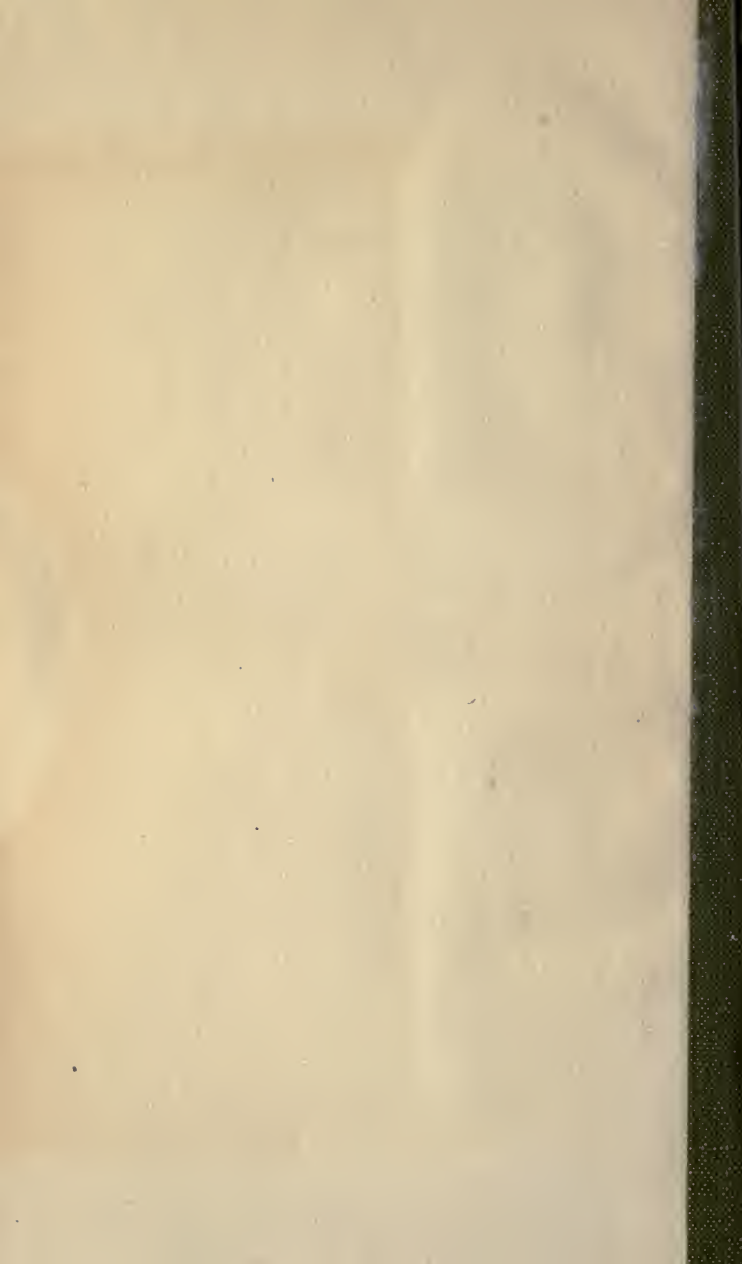












**University of Toronto  
Library**

---

**DO NOT  
REMOVE  
THE  
CARD  
FROM  
THIS  
POCKET**

---



